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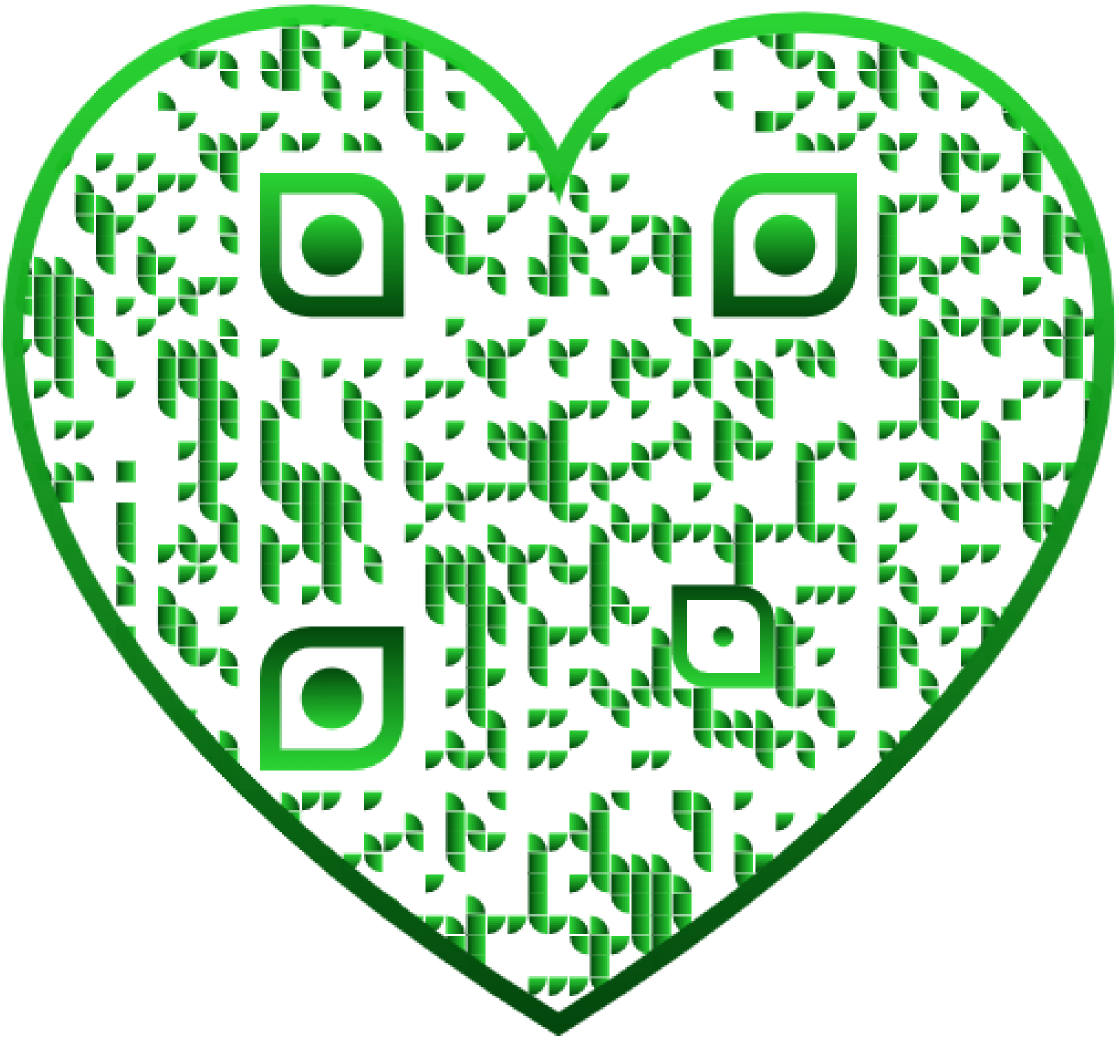

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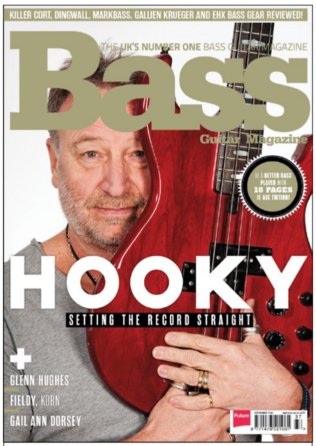

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If anyone ever tells you that we bass players are shy, retiring types, happy to play a supportive role rather than draw attention to themselves, firstly slap them with a wet fish and then hand them this issue of *BGM*. It's packed to the nines with genuine rock'n'roll characters: musicians who love the limelight and the chance it gives them to express their unique talents. We've got the great Peter Hook on our cover, recalling a unique career with Joy Division, New Order and his band The Light; Glenn Hughes, whose escapades through Deep Purple, Black Sabbath and elsewhere would surpass those of any other three musicians put together; and Gail Ann Dorsey, a true philosopher whose work with David Bowie, Lenny Kravitz and other luminaries makes her interview truly essential. Fieldy from Korn, Steve DiGiorgio of Testament and a fistful of other low-frequency legends make this issue essential.

That said, they're all essential. Here at the *BGM* command bunker our mission to make you a better bass player is as relevant now as it was when we started out back in 2002. Take a look at our review section, where we cater for all budgets (from a £59 chorus pedal to a £1200 bass guitar) and our world-class tuition pages, where the cream of this country's bass educators assemble to pass on their hard-earned wisdom. On a related note, talking of assembled bass players, make sure you've diarised the London Bass Guitar Show for 4 and 5 March next year: announcements are on the way about some truly amazing bass performances. We can't wait! Until then...

Joel McIver, editor

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THE LOW DOWN

News and views from the bass world, collated by BGM's team of intrepid newshounds

SHOWING UP

The London Bass Guitar Show 2017, to be held on 4 and 5 March at London's Olympia venue in association with *Bass Guitar Magazine*, is filling up with exhibitors and performances as we speak. As previous visitors to the LBGS will know, it's this country's bass event of the year, with performances in recent years from a host of stars including Robert Trujillo of Metallica, John Taylor of Duran Duran, Mark King of Level 42, Lee Sklar, Paul Turner, Mo Foster, Steve Lawson, David Ellefson, Guy Pratt, Peter Hook, Roger Glover, Billy Sheehan, Stu Hamm, Divinity Roxx, Suzi Quatro, Jeff Berlin, Michael Manring, Dave Swift and many, many others. Watch out for artist announcements as we have them, but in the meantime diarise a visit to stands full of amazing bass gear from Rotosound, Ernie Ball, Aguilar, Spector, Peavey, Barnes & Mullins, Vanderkley, Bassline Publishing, European Guitar Builders, Rikkers, De Gier, ACG and many more to be announced. See you there!
www.londonbassguitarshow.com, www.facebook.com/londonbassguitarshow, @bassguitarshow

ON SPEC

Barnes & Mullins have announced two new Walnut Stain models to their Spector Legend Neck-Thru series, available in four- and five-string versions. Based on Spector's familiar NS body shape, the new additions are carved from solid maple with a figured maple top and come with passive Aguilar DCB humbuckers as well as Aguilar OBP-2 active tone controls. A pro-grade brass nut and graphite-reinforced three-piece maple necks top these tasty instruments off: the four-string bass retails at £1229 and the five at £1279.
www.bandm.co.uk

OH, SUZI Q

On October 19, the singer, songwriter and bassist Suzi Quatro was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Music by Anglia Ruskin University at the Cambridge Corn Exchange. A rock icon for over half a century, Suzi was a pioneer in the 1970s glam-rock scene, selling 55 million albums along the way and becoming a TV star thanks to roles such as Leather Tuscadero in *Happy Days*. In celebration of Suzi's 50th year in the music industry in 2014, the BBC hosted a performance of her one-woman show, *Unzipped*, recorded for broadcast on Radio 2 that year, and a career-spanning four-CD box set, *The Girl From Detroit City*, was also released. Raise your glasses for Dr Quattrocchio, D.Mus.

www.suziquatro.com

STONE FREE(K)

The Stonefield Musical Instrument Company, based in Christchurch, New Zealand, have recently shot a promotional video with a difference for their Freekbass Signature Model, which features both Freekbass and Stonefield founder Tomm Stanley. As Tomm tells *BGM*, "When Freekbass and I started working through promotional ideas for his Signature Model, I had asked if he would be available to come down to New Zealand to film some demo and promo clips for us. I wanted the clips to be cooler than what you usually see: a musician sitting on a stool clicking through control options. Freek and I are both sci-fi fans, and he's big into comic books too. We have a really cool working dynamic and we're both big thinkers, so the discussion quickly ramped up to making a sci-fi, superhero, fantasy kind of movie. Somewhere along the way reality set in and we downscaled it to a mini movie."

Freekbass, who came to NZ for the three-day filming schedule, says, "I wrapped up a gig in New York City not even half a day before I was getting on a plane to NZ, arriving midday on a Sunday there, which is a Saturday here. That whole 'cross the date line' time zone thing is always a little trippy, and shooting started the next morning. We filmed for three days and most of the filming locations looked like something out of another world. I was back on a plane the following day and got home about 12 hours before the next gig – so the whole experience was just surreal."

For a sneak peek at the movie, *Looking For The Bassmaker*, visit http://stonefield-musical-instrument-company.myshopify.com/pages/looking-for-the-bassmaker-trailer

CHOW DOWN

West Country luthiers Chowny have announced redesigned CHB-1 and CHB-2 models for 2017. They tell us that the redesign offers better balance and access to the top frets, while remaining faithful to the retro spirit of the design. The spec is unaltered, with both basses featuring two humbuckers and chrome hardware. Preorder one of four flamed maple finishes at an RRP of £460 to £475.

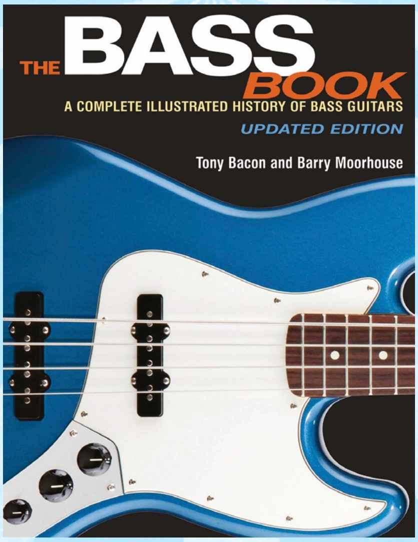
www.chownybass.com

Win

Win one of three copies of the new edition of *The Bass Book* by Tony Bacon and Barry Moorhouse by answering this question:

Which of these is not a real bass?
A Fender Thunderbird
B Gibson Ripper
C BC Rich Eagle

Answers by 16 December to http://www.bassguitarmagazine.com/competition.



REVOLVER

Every month we tell you the bass-line we can't stop listening to

THIS MONTH: Cypress Hill, 'I Ain't Goin' Out Like That'

Bassist: Who knows?
Please, someone out there let us know who played bass on this song from Cypress Hill's second album *Black Sunday*, released in 1993 – it's such a hooky line, and so much fun to play, that we'd like to pay appropriate tribute. But that's hip-hop for you: whether this amazing, four-note lick was played or sampled, only Cypress Hill themselves know. File under 'Reasons to love hip-hop even though they're not using real bass.'

BASSWATCH

Every month, keen bass-spotter Ray Walker brings us a bargain.

This month: Alembic Epic Essence, £1,900
http://tinyurl.com/j5ljne6

We don't see many of these on eBay. This 22-year-old, born-in-the-USA, neck-through beauty comes with a mahogany body and a five-piece maple neck. The lightweight body measures just 12 inches across, and the extended top horn helps keep it beautifully balanced. With 24 frets on an ebony fretboard, this is a delicious little player. With a solid-brass bridge and tailpiece, as well as Alembic pickups and Gotoh machine heads, it's exactly what we've come to expect from the California-based company.

SMALL TALK

Distributors JHS have announced two new bass ukuleles, the VUB60EA (RRP £219) and the VUB90EA (RRP £269). The former has a mahogany/sapele body, a mahogany neck, a fretless rosewood fingerboard and a Fishman Clásica II preamp system, while the latter earns the extra 50 quid of its pricetag thanks to an acacia koa body. You may find these nifty instruments – rubber strings and all – a little unorthodox, but believe us, we've plugged these babies in and their bass response will blow your mind. Look out for a review shortly, and a competition giveaway not long after that.

www.jhs.co.uk/brands/laka

GREAT SCOTT

Check out sometime Kyuss bassist Scott Reeder's custom Masterbuilt Katana eight-string bass from German luthiers Warwick. A leftie tuned to C# and finished in 'Chrome-Tone', equipped with four normal and four octave strings and a metal plate at the end of the fingerboard (so that Scott doesn't damage the wood with his 'vigorous' playing style), the Katana is a true one of a kind. A trip to Scott's farm in California may just be in order...

www.warwick.de

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www.enfield.guitars
Photo by Budge Broady

BASSICALLY SPEAKING

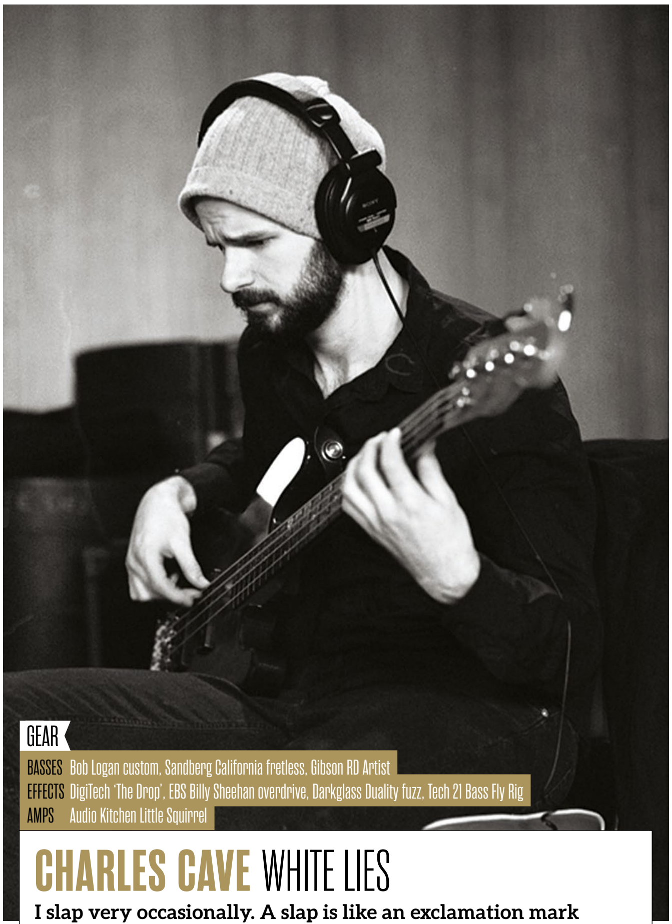
Bassists reveal the tricks of their trade faster than a snapping D string

GEAR
BASSES Overwater Aspiration Deluxe V, Squier Jazz
EFFECTS Tech 21 Sansamp Bass Driver DI
AMPS Peavey, Hartke

JULIA CADAU ANGEL NATION

I'm a rock and metal player, but I also enjoy genres like punk and new wave where the bass is prominent. I've been playing a five-string bass since I joined Angel Nation as most of the songs require a lower range. The neck is not so easy to navigate for someone with small hands, but apart from that the extra string of doom is a lot of fun, especially live. I use fingerstyle 90 per cent of the time. I might slap once in a blue moon when a song needs that extra percussive sound, but it doesn't really suit the type of music I play. I think there are no secrets or shortcuts. What it takes to play bass or any other instrument well is practice – especially with other musicians – and determination. Bonus points for attitude. My first bass was a black Ibanez GIO, the cheapest I could find back in my Sardinian hometown of Cagliari. It was good enough for a beginner, but I upgraded to something with a bit more character after a year or so. My favourite bass has to be a good old Jazz. It's timeless, versatile and playable. Sure, it may not look that exciting, but I've owned several less conventional-looking basses and they were way too uncomfortable to play live. From a wishlist point of view, I would love to get my hands on a Wal, possibly a fretless Mk1. There are so many bassists I admire for their distinctive style. Geddy Lee, Mick Karn, Gianni Maroccolo of Litfiba, and of course John Entwistle and Geezer Butler, to name a few. They really changed the way I look at the instrument. Bass is an extraordinary instrument. The depth of its sound touches the soul, and there is nothing more powerful than that.

www.facebook.com/angelnationmusic

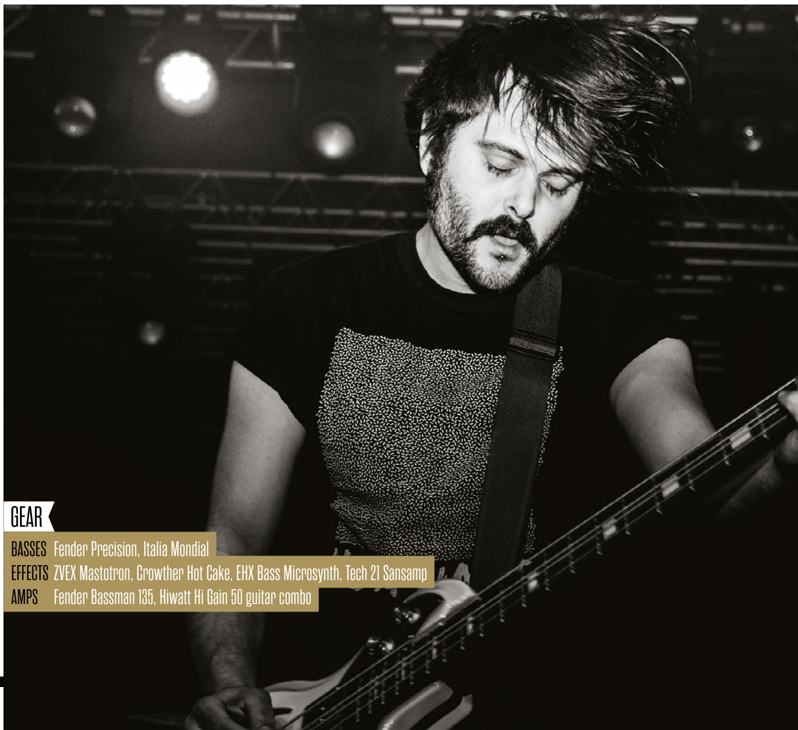


GEAR
BASSES Bob Logan custom, Sandberg California fretless, Gibson RD Artist
EFFECTS DigiTech 'The Drop', EBS Billy Sheehan overdrive, Darkglass Duality fuzz, Tech 21 Bass Fly Rig
AMPS Audio Kitchen Little Squirrel

CHARLES CAVE WHITE LIES

I slap very occasionally. A slap is like an exclamation mark in writing; if you riddle a page with them, people are going to start to think you've lost your mind! The secret of playing bass well is complete control of the strings, being able to mute them as easily as you strike them, and knowing how they sound when you play them with every different part of your finger and at every different point on the string itself. Also, listen to everything happening in the music and play a bass-line that is considerate to every part of the arrangement, not just the drums. My favourite bass to date is a custom-made instrument made by Bob Logan, with a four-string P-Bass shape, chambered body, bubinga top, Nol preamp and Nordstrand Big Singles pickups. It's just the best of so many worlds and a joy to play. I've played it for years but never as my number one bass on stage, however on this upcoming tour it will be. My bass heroes are Mick Karn, Rex Brown, Geddy Lee, Percy Jones, Nick Seymour and Alphonso Johnson. If you're playing with your fingers, your most important 'effects' are nail clippers and a nail file.

www.whitelies.com



GEAR
BASSES Fender Precision, Italia Mondial
EFFECTS ZVEX Mastotron, Crowther Hot Cake, EHX Bass Microsynth, Tech 21 Sansamp
AMPS Fender Bassman 135, Hiwatt Hi Gain 50 guitar combo

GEAR

BASSES Spector Euro6LX, NS Design CR5M EUB, NS Design CR5 Radius A, Czech-built upright bass
EFFECTS DOD 240, Boss TU-2, OC-2 and RC-300, Morley PBA-2 Wah, Seymour Duncan Vapor Trail, eBow, Electro-Harmonix Bass Soul Food, Locustom Overbass Jr
AMPS Warwick BC80, Warwick LWA 1000 with WCA 112 and WCA 408 cabinets

BRITTANY FROMPOVICH

My bass style is punchy, earthy, organic, and creative. I use my Spector six-string bass for shows because that's what I'm most comfortable with. During the work day with my students, I'll switch between four-, five- and six-string basses. I slap when it's musically appropriate or when it correctly expresses something I want to say. Patience, persistence, and making your growth as a musician a priority are all essential. Have a focused agenda for your practice time. Make sure your practice is structured to serve your musical goals. My first bass was an old Kay upright that I borrowed from my school. For electric bass, my first was a Vantage four-string bass that I defretted.

My bass heroes are Michael Manring, John Paul Jones, Adam Nitti, Edgar Meyer, Stanley Clarke, Michael Dimin, Bryan Beller, James Jamerson, Darren Michaels, Aaron Gibson, Trip Wamsley, Jack Casady and Felix Pappalardi. That's certainly not a complete list, but those are a few of my influences. The greatest bass player that ever lived? That's a hard one for me, because in my mind music doesn't work like that. We're all working to evolve the craft in our own way. There's many innovators making meaningful contributions in the community, pushing the whole game forward for everyone, but if I could get the bass tone of any album ever released, I would choose Matt Bissonette's tone from Joe Satriani's *Extremist* album.

I'm currently playing a lot of gigs around Northern Virginia for a few different groups. I'm also working with a director who wants to produce a documentary about my story. We filmed in July at the 10th Anniversary LoDo Bass Bash (more at www.gofundme.com/allofme). We're wrapping up filming for the doc very soon: the next step will be editing. At that point, I'll be writing and recording music for it. I became an artist endorser for Locustom pedals this summer. I've been using the Overbass Jr: it's a punchy, growly pedal and responsive to the player's touch. And I've just completed work on my new site, ladybassmusic.com. There's new content being developed as we go into 2017, so folks will see the site evolve as that content is brought online.

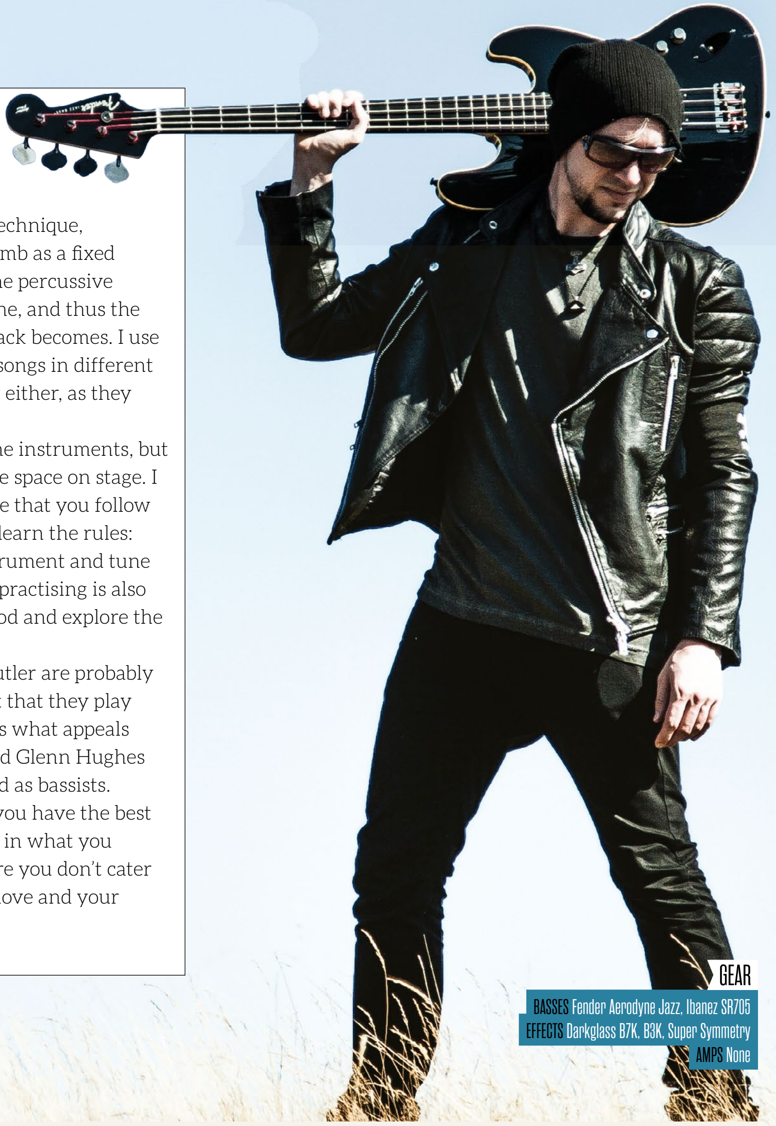
www.ladybassmusic.com

JIMI WHEELWRIGHT TIGERCUB

Get the big fuzz to cover your inadequacies! I do not play five- or six-string bass, because I play bass outside of my bedroom. Be understated, be the glue: good bass playing doesn't leave much room for ego. My first bass was a really cheap P-Bass copy, a Rikter. I ended up ripping the frets off and re-lacquering. I found it in my parents' loft this year and it actually plays really well. My favourite bass ever to date is my 1966 Precision, it's been modded with a 66J pickup and is probably the only bass I will record ever again. My bass heroes are Les Claypool, Bob Weston, Charles Mingus and Herbie Flowers. The greatest bass player that ever lived was almost definitely James Jamerson. We just recorded our first LP and it comes out this November on Alcopop. We've worked hard for years getting to where we are now, and we're really happy with it.

www.tigercubtigercub.co.uk

MATT HUDSON MEMOREVE



I tend to play quite aggressively both on stage and when recording our records, which I think comes from achieving the tones that are generated by my technique. I play using fingerstyle technique, using only two fingers on my right hand and without using my thumb as a fixed support. My tone is very high-end driven. The 'click and clack' of the percussive element of the fingerstyle plays a massive part in generating my tone, and thus the more aggressively I play, the sharper and heavier that high-end attack becomes. I use both four- and five-string basses in the studio and live, as we have songs in different tuning. I find the four-string more fun to play but I'm happy to play either, as they both contribute to the songs in their own way.

It can be difficult in smaller venues with storing and swapping the instruments, but we work very hard to reduce our backline to accommodate for more space on stage. I think the secret to great playing, for any instrument, is to make sure that you follow your own path in the instrument's discovery. Don't be too hasty to learn the rules: if anything, completely ignore them. Simply have fun with the instrument and tune your ear to the music that you wish to play. Learning how to enjoy practising is also key. You can't force it: you'll only get frustrated, so play to your mood and explore the instrument as you wish.

Several bassists have inspired me but Steve Harris and Geezer Butler are probably my biggest influences, purely for their sense of melody and the fact that they play with true grit. For me what makes a great artist is integrity, so that's what appeals to me in a musician. I must say that both Andy Fraser from Free and Glenn Hughes from Deep Purple and Black Sabbath are both criminally underrated as bassists. Everyone should check them out! I don't give a monkey's whether you have the best gear or the greatest knowledge of music theory, if you don't believe in what you play then it won't stand up and fans will see through it, so make sure you don't cater to others. Have as much fun as possible developing music that you love and your integrity will shine through. Work hard and play harder!

www.memoreve.com

GEAR
BASSES Fender Aerodyne Jazz, Ibanez SR705
EFFECTS Darkglass B7K, B3K, Super Symmetry
AMPS None

NICK JOHNSON DEVILMENT

Bass has to fit in the pocket and bridge the gap between drums and guitars, keys and so on in Devilment. I don't play complex bass-lines or really embellish my playing in any way: there's a lot of driving root notes and I spend most of my time making sure I'm locked down as tight as possible. At the end of the day I'm not here to show off: I have a role to play in producing the overall sound and that's what I focus on. During the recording session for *Devilment II: The Mephisto Waltzes*, Scott Atkins, our producer, had me really focus in hard on accenting notes to get the best connection between my bass-lines, the drums and guitars. On the new album I'm tuned GCGCF, so having the extra stability in the low strings that a five-string bass offers is great. My favourite bass ever to date is my Warwick Corvette Standard four-string. It is just a beast, through and through. I've done countless recording sessions and live shows with it, thrown it across stages, dropped it, replaced half the hardware and had the pickups fall out, but it just keeps on going and the tone is killer. I spent a good deal of my student loan on it in during my second year of uni, which made affording to live somewhat interesting, but totally worth it. That bass is a keeper for life.

GEAR
BASSES Schecter Diamond-J Plus
EFFECTS Seymour Duncan Studio Bass Compressor
AMPS Tech 21 Sansamp RBI, Gallien-Krueger 1001RB II

My bass heroes? Lemmy always stood out to me when I was a kid as there is just no-one who played bass anything like him. Not just his playing style, but the monstrous tone and power just blew me away. I've seen Motörhead live a few times and they were always amazing: watching them from the side of the stage at Graspop last summer topped all the other shows, though! Justin Chancellor from Tool has an amazing tone which I really admire, and a unique approach to how the bass sits in their music. Bart Williams, ex-The Black Dahlia Murder, was also a big influence on me trying to improve on my fingerstyle playing. Just a total machine locking down the low end. The mind is the limit. As long as the mind can envision the fact that you can do something, you can do it, as long as you really believe 100 per cent. I didn't say that. Arnold Schwarzenegger did. Say it in an Austrian accent, it sounds better!

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GEAR

BASSES Fender Precision

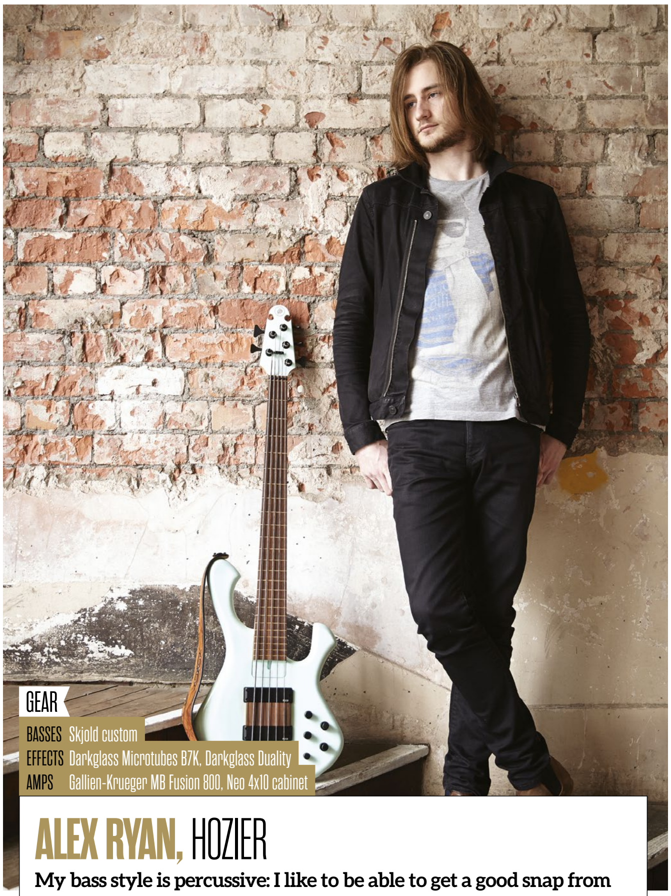
EFFECTS Old random pedal compressor, EHX Bass Big Muff Pi, EHX Bass Micro Synthesizer, Tech 21 Sansamp Programmable Bass Driver DI

AMPS Ampeg SVT III Pro

HUFFY HAFERA DEATH VALLEY HIGH

I bang on my bass like it's a drum, going for a low-down, dirty tone that you can't help but shake your ass to. I do not play five- or six-string bass. I probably should, as the majority of our songs are in drop B. Stylistically though, I'm not a six-string kinda player and we ain't no jazz-funk band. I force four-string basses to work in our tunings. Heavy gauge strings and a lot of tuning. It can be a pain in the studio, but it's how I get down. It's a bit of that Jack White idea of avoiding the easy way to do things. I don't have a problem with slap playing, but it really wouldn't make any sense with our sound. I do love when Noel from the Mighty Boosh takes the piss out of slap bass though! There are so many ways to play bass, and taste is subjective. I think you have to find the style of play that makes you stoked to plug in and crank it. If you aren't moving to your own groove, nobody else will. Technically the first bass I owned was a Fender Mustang. It was dope, but short scale which didn't work well with dropped tunings, so I returned it quickly and fell in love with an American Fender P-Bass in a tobacco sunburst finish. I'm pretty much the prime example for how not to treat your gear. That poor bass has chips, dings, and scratches all over it from throwing it across stages and hitting cymbals with the headstock. It's got battle scars, electrical tape and a ziptie holding it together. I've always thought those 'who's the best of all time' lists and arguments were silly. Music is personal, for the artist and for the listener. The best of all time is whoever gives you goose bumps and makes you want to move right now. We are super stoked about our new album *Cvlt [As Fvk]* coming out November 4, with European and American tours kicking off this fall with Killing Joke. This next year is going to be insane for us.

www.deathvalleyhigh.com



GEAR

BASSES Skjold custom

EFFECTS Darkglass Microtubes B7K, Darkglass Duality

AMPS Gallien-Krueger MB Fusion 800, Neo 4x10 cabinet

ALEX RYAN, HOZIER

My bass style is percussive: I like to be able to get a good snap from the strings hitting the frets now and then. I have some experience as a drummer, so I think that has given me a certain rhythmic awareness that translates to my bass playing. I play five-string basses, as I appreciate the depth and thickness that the fifth string can offer. Those frequencies certainly contribute a lot in Hozier's music, which is often very dark, pitch-wise. I slap a little, but it's rarely called for onstage. I do so because I don't like the thought of being limited in what I can achieve on my instrument. After all, slapping for a recording session might pay the bills somewhere down the line. I do play with my thumb quite a bit, though not often in a typically 'slap' manner. If only there were a single, concise secret that would instruct one as to how an instrument might be mastered. In its stead, I would offer that being a decent human being will always come before being a decent musician. Know your place, socially and musically; nobody wants to play with a fool. Apart from that, always respect the music before your instrument. That goes for all musicians, not just bassists.

My first bass was some kind of red Yamaha that my folks bought for me when I was about 10 or 11. I've still got it, but time has not been kind to the hardware. My favourite bass is my quilted maple-topped Skjold, though I've got a feeling that the custom model Pete Skjold is building for me might just take its place when it's ready. My bass heroes are Richard Bona, Damian Erskine and Troy Sanders of Mastodon. Damian's extreme fluidity of playing is something I really strive for myself. To speak of the single greatest bass player that ever lived is, I think, a simplistic and unrealistic challenge. I will say that Victor Wooten, techniques aside, has a truly wonderful feel. He should have more recognition for that aspect of his playing. If I could achieve the bass tone of any album ever released, I think I would have to choose *Crack The Skye* by Mastodon. I just love the way it speaks: thanks to the band's low tuning and a generous mix position, the sheer size and aggression of it is fantastic. In an attempt to say something profound, I will say this: always put your head before your hands. There is a vital psychological aspect to performance: the wrong head space can cripple your means to articulate your instrument, whatever it may be. True, unwavering knowledge of your ability will reveal the path to brilliance.

www.hozier.com

The Luthier

Getting angular with ace luthier Douglas Mullen of Eve Basses

> "How many times have you played an instrument off the shelf, or a friend's bass at a gig or jam night, and found yourself fighting with the neck?"

Over the last few issues, we've considered in detail the composition of the neck, fingerboard and neck join. However, there is one aspect of the neck join that I wanted to explore exclusively in this month's issue – the neck angle.

What is the neck angle, you may ask? How many times have you played an instrument off the shelf, or a friend's bass at a gig or jam night, and found yourself fighting with the neck? The strings are so far from the fingerboard that you have grooves in your fingertips minutes after playing, and it becomes almost impossible to fret after the seventh or ninth fret. What makes that happen, and can it only be resolved by adjusting the bridge height saddles? The reality is somewhat more complex, as I shall endeavour to explain.

Correct string height is essential for comfort and intonation. Too far from the board and notes become almost impossible to play. I'm always surprised that so many players just simply play 'from the box' and are hesitant to make adjustments. Understandably, tinkering with the truss rod without knowing what you're doing can be dangerous to the health of the neck, but done properly, it can make massive difference to your playing.

The first thing to do when the neck is difficult to play is to 'sight' the neck. Look from the nut along the length of the neck with one eye closed. You should see a slight bend in the neck away from the direction of the strings. If the neck is too straight, notes can choke out. When you sight the neck, you'll notice that the heavier strings (E or B) have slightly more of a bow due to the mass of the strings pulling the neck up. That's acceptable: as long as the neck isn't actually warped, things should be fine.

Next to consider is the bridge saddle height. There are many schools of thought on exact height, but personally, I like to set up the bridge height as low as possible without fret buzz: it's then easier to raise the action if you are an aggressive player, or you like to dig in when playing either with a pick or fingerstyle. If after this, you find there is a problem, then you may have to consider the neck angle. Put simply, this is how the neck has been made to fit the body pocket. Almost every commercial bolt-on instrument is butt-jointed without an angle. This can exaggerate bow in certain circumstances and has to be looked at by a professional. A cheap and dirty trick is to 'shim' the neck closest to the neck bolts with a thin strip of wood veneer or plastic. This creates a slight gap so the neck isn't making 100% contact with the body pocket, which can affect the sound.

Almost none of the neck-through basses I've come across have a neck angle, and players just seem to live with a higher action after the 12th fret. If you consider the pictures on this page, you can see the difference. The image on the left shows a traditional bolt-on 'flat' join, and the one on the right shows an angled shim tapering from the body towards the neck. This has the advantage of the neck tapering towards the body, and thus is more comfortable than the neck bending away from your fretting hand. This is where strain and injury occurs. If in doubt, consider a neck angle – it may be the key to more comfortable playing and a lower action.

info@evebass.com

Applied Improvisation with

Rockschool

Metric Modulation Part II, with Nik Preston

Welcome back! In the last column we covered two of the most basic subdivisions used for metric modulation: triplets and dotted note lengths. Hopefully you can now move seamlessly between the two. Both of these subdivisions, as mentioned in the previous column, are inextricably linked, as shown in **example 1**.

If we transition from a quarter note pulse to a dotted quaver note length pulse (also referred to as 4:3) and assume the dotted quaver as the new pulse (as shown in bar 7) we've managed to modulate from one tempo to another: this is essentially 'stage 1' if you will. In order to transition back to the original tempo (100 BPM) the best approach is generally never to have stopped counting or feeling the original one, which is easier said than done.

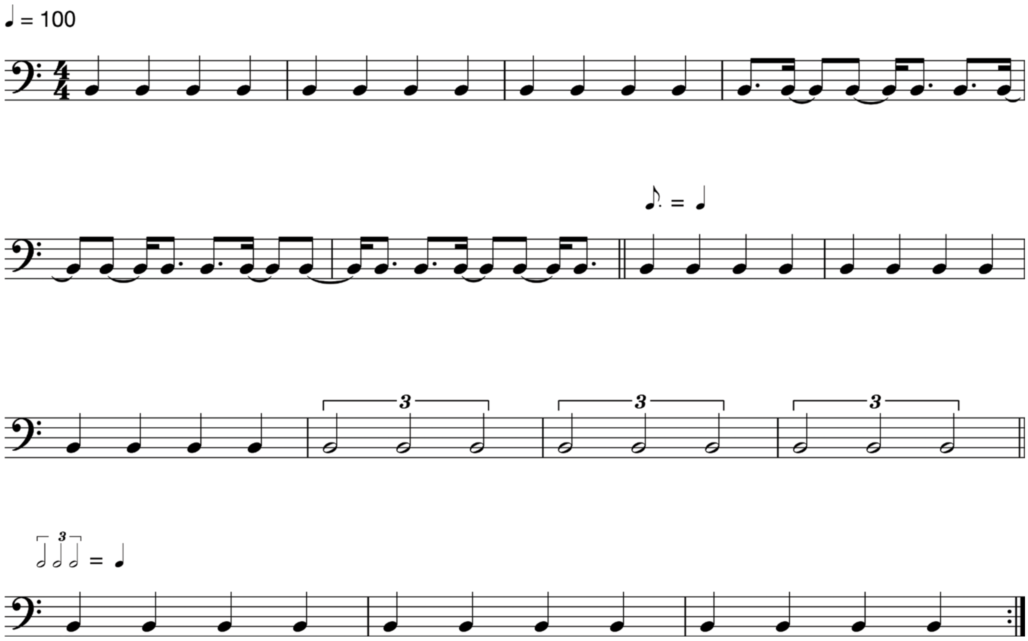
In order to help you modulate, and improve your understanding of how both subdivisions correlate, you just need to apply half-note triplets as another new pulse (as shown in bar 10) and this new subdivision is actually the original pulse (as shown in bar 13). Essentially, by mastering this cycle you will have learnt to transition smoothly from one pulse to another, and back again!

The relationship between dotted note length values and triplet subdivisions is crucial to metric modulation, and while your preferred genre may not be made up of copious amounts of such concepts, the skills gained by learning to hear and play different subdivisions and pulses is hugely beneficial to our rhythmic development and sense of pulse.

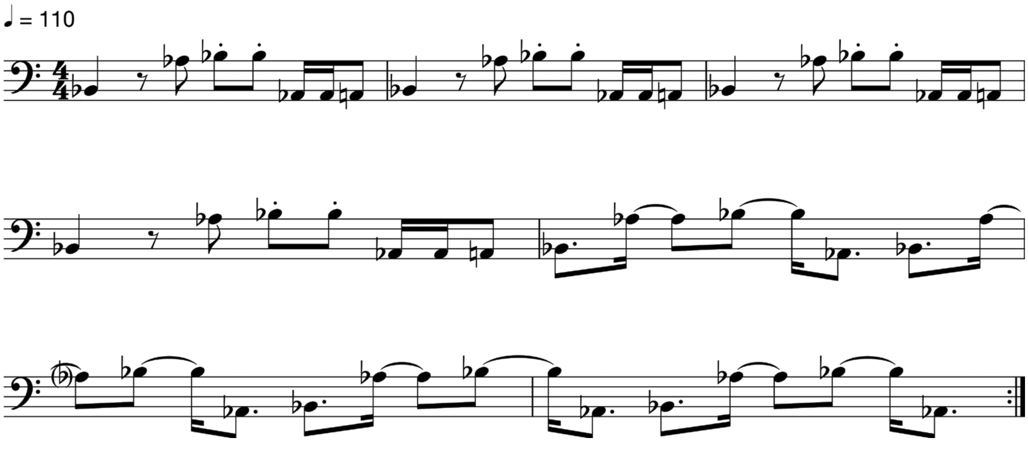
Example 2 shows you a very basic funk groove in Bb and an example of how an equally basic groove may sound if we modulate to a dotted quaver pulse, using similar notes. The pitches themselves are not as crucial as the rhythmic content, but this should go some way to illustrating how we might apply the concept to the context. Both of these examples could be applied to a Bb7 or a Bbmin7 chord.

Until next time!

EXAMPLE 1



EXAMPLE 2



PROMENADE MUSIC

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4 String Basses

15278 - Bass Collection Jive Bass Black n Blocks
13994 - Bass Collection Portrait Fretless Bass
15510 - Bass Collection Rhythm Stick, Sunburst
10067 - Brian May Bass in Cherry with Gig Bag
13805 - Cort Action Deluxe, Faded Grey Burst
12314 - Cort GB4 Custom Spalted Maple Top
12807 - Cort Jeff Berlin Rithimic 4 String Bass
15242 - Cort Jeff Berlin Rithimic 5 String Bass
14402 - Danelectro DL58 Longhorn Bass, Black

Fender

14607 - Fender 64 Closet Classic J, Sburst, Used
14643 - Fender Am Dlx Dimension Bass IV Cayenne
9084 - Fender American Special Jazz Bass, CAR
14582 - Fender American Std Jazz Bass, O. White
15569 - Fender Am. Std Precision Bass, Sunburst
15354 - Fender American Vintage '74 Jazz Bass
15207 - Fender Classic Special 60's P Bass FSR
15536 - Fender Dlx Active Jazz Bass Surf Pearl
15571 - Fender Dlx Active P Bass Special Okoume
15529 - Fender Deluxe Dimension Bass IV, ACBurst
15417 - Fender Japan Classic 60s Jazz Bass Ocean
15377 - Fender Japan Classic 70s Jazz, Sunburst
15412 - Fender Jap. FSR Classic 70s P Bass White
12426 - Fender Standard Jazz Bass Brown Sunburst
9909 - Fender Standard P Bass, Lake Placid Blue
12689 - G & L L1500 USA 4 String Bass, Sunburst
15266 - G & L Tribute Series M2000, Sunburst
12895 - G&L Tribute L2000 4 String Bass Guitar
12805 - G&L Tribute L2000 Lefty 4 String Bass
14362 - G2220 Junior Jet Bass II Black
12188 - Hofner Ignition Violin Bass, Sunburst
15381 - Lakland 4402 Deluxe Fretless Bass, Used
15096 - LE Marquis NY Violin Bass, Lefty, Used
8073 - Lodestone Primal Artist
8081 - Lodestone Primal Pro in Chignal Blue

Marleaux

15409 - Marleaux Consat Custom 4 String Bass
15403 - Marleaux Sopran Short Scale 4 String
14167 - Marleaux Votan XS Deluxe, Black Burst
14946 - MusicMan Stingray 3EQ Black, Maple Neck

Orange

15107 - Orange O Bass, Off-Black
15106 - Orange O Bass Tear Drop Sunburst
15105 - Orange O Bass in Orange
14367 - PRS SE Kingfisher Bass, Natural
11197 - Spector Bass Performer 4, Red
13337 - Spector Coda Pro 4 Black Cherry Stain
14105 - Spector Legend Standard 4 Blue Stain
15370 - Squier Classic Vibe 50s P Bass, W.Blonde
4615 - Squier Vintage Modified Jazz 77, Black
15675 - Squier Vint Mod Jazz Bass 70s, CAR, Used
14778 - Vintage ICON V74MR Fretless, Sunburst
14613 - Vintage Icon VJ74 MRBK, Distressed Black
14490 - Vintage LV4BB Lefthanded 4 String, Black
14407 - Vintage LVJ74 Lefthanded Bass Guitar, Natural
14489 - Vintage VJ74MSSB Bass, Sunset Sunburst
15268 - Warwick Adam Clayton Solid Creme White

WestCoast

6446 - Westcoast BG4 Neck Thru Body, Brown
8437 - Westcoast JP1 4 String Bass in Trans Red

YAMAHA

14836 - Yamaha 2024 Bass, Sunburst, Secondhand
10120 - Yamaha BB1024X 4 String, Caramel Brown
4649 - Yamaha BB2024X, VSB Vintage Sunburst
6953 - Yamaha BB424X, Vintage White
5634 - Yamaha BB714BS Billy Sheehan, Lava Red
13927 - Yamaha TRBX174EW, Translucent Black
13926 - Yamaha TRBX174EW, Translucent Natural
13137 - Yamaha TRBX304 Bass In Mist Green
14935 - Yamaha TRBX504 Bass, Trans Black
14934 - Yamaha TRBX504 Bass, Trans Brown

5 String Basses

0000 - Cort 5 Models In Stock Now
14639 - Fender American Deluxe Dimension V, Violin
15360 - Fender American Deluxe Jazz Bass V Black
15281 - Fender American Deluxe Jazz Bass V, Nat
15530 - Fender Deluxe Active Jazz Bass V, Black
13117 - Fender Deluxe Dimension Bass V Natural
9702 - G&L Tribute L2500 5-String In Walnut
15265 - G&L Tribute L2500 5 String, Bluebust
15261 - Lakland 5501 5 String Bass, Black
15410 - Marleaux Consat Custom 5 String Bass
15407 - Marleaux Contra 5, Old Violin Finish
15408 - Marleaux Diva Fretless 5-String Bass
15406 - Marleaux MBass Custom 2012 5 String Bass
13875 - Kelly Dragonfly 5 Fretless Acoustic Bass
0000 - MusicMan - 2 Models in Stock Now
10960 - Pedulla Rapture Fretted 5-String Bass
5121 - Rockbass Streamer LX5, Black
15466 - Sadowsky Will Lee 5-String, Green, Used
15343 - Spector Bass Legend 5 Custom Bubinga
12406 - Spector Legend Custom 5 String, Amber
11195 - Spector SF5BK Performer 5 in Black
15294 - Warwick RB Corvette 5,White High Polish
15295 - Warwick RB Streamer NT4, Yellow Polish
15293 - Warwick Corvette $$ 5-String, Black
6448 - Westcoast JB5, Trans Amber
8275 - Yamaha BB425X,Sunburst, Used
8999 - Yamaha RBX5A2 5 String Bass, Black
13193 - Yamaha TRB1005J Bass, Black
7223 - Yamaha TRB5 5-String Bass in Sunburst
10310 - Yamaha TRBX505 Bass

Acoustic Basses

15234 - Fender Kingman Bass SCE with Case
5393 - Levin LAB150 Bass, Electro 4, Black
5394 - Levin LAB150 Bass, Electro 4, Natural
5392 - Levin LAB150 Bass, Electro 4, Sunburst
13875 - Kelly Dragonfly 5 Fretless Acoustic Bass
14263 - Takamine GB72CE Jumbo Cutaway
15157 - Takamine GB72CE Jumbo Cutaway
13014 - Tanglewood TWRBE Travel Bass Guitar

Electric Upright Basses

4910 - Bridge Cetus Electric Double Bass
5110 - NS Design NXT Electric Double Bass
14482 - NS Design NXT Electric Double Bass
6360 - Yamaha SLB200 Silent Double Bass

Fretless Basses

15381 - Lakland 4402 Deluxe Fretless Bass, Used
15408 - Marleaux Diva Fretless 5-String Bass
13875 - Kelly Dragonfly 5 Fretless Acoustic Bass
13371 - Squier Vintage Modified Fretless Bass
14778 - Vintage ICON V74MR Fretless, Sunburst

String Deals

2 Sets of Elite (4 String) £25 inc P&P
2 Sets of Elite (5 String) £30 inc P&P
2 Sets of Rotosound (4 String) £25 inc P&P
2 Sets of Rotosound (5 String) £30 inc P&P
2 Sets of D'Addario (4 String) £35 inc P&P
2 Sets of D'Addario (4 String) £40 inc P&P

Bass Combos

13577 - AER Amp III Bass Amp Combo
5627 - AER Amp One (200W, 1x10)

Ashdown Engineering

15188 - Ashdown AAA 120 15T 120w 1 x 15"
15190 - Ashdown AAA 30 8 30w 1 x 8" Combo
15187 - Ashdown AAA 300 210T 300w 2 x 10"
15189 - Ashdown AAA 60 10T 60w 1 x 10" Combo
6459 - Ashdown ABM C210T-500 EVO 3 (
15192 - Ashdown B-Social Bass Amp +Bluetooth
8753 - Ashdown Five Fifteen Mini Rig 100
8750 - Ashdown Perfect Ten Bass Combo
15182 - Ashdown RM C112T 500 EVO 500w 1x12
15180 - Ashdown RMC115T 500 500w 1x15 Bass
15181 - Ashdown RMC210T500 EVO 500w 2x10"
5224 - Ashdown Tourbus 10 (10W, 1x6.5)
13905 - Blackstar ID Core BEAM Bluetooth Amp
13806 - Cort GE30 Bass Amp Combo
8988 - EA Euphonic Audio iAmp 350 Bass Head

Eden

13705 - Eden D210XLT 8Ohms Bass Amp Combo
12430 - Eden EC10 50 Watts Bass Amp Combo
12432 - Eden EC15 180W Bass Amp Combo
12431 - Eden EC210 2 x 10 Bass Amp Combo
13375 - Eden EC28 Bass Amp Combo
13566 - Eden EGRW1264 Head & Cab Package
13704 - Eden EM275 Bass Amp Combo

Fender

12686 - Fender Bronco 40 Bass Amp
13497 - Fender Rumble 100 Bass Amp Combo
4238 - Fender Rumble 15 (15W, 1x8)
12745 - Fender Rumble 200 Bass Combo
15113 - Fender Rumble 25 Bass Amp Combo
13083 - Fender Rumble 40 Bass Amp Combo
15114 - Fender Rumble 500 Bass Amp Combo

Hartke

14093 - Hartke HD15 Bass Combo
14095 - Hartke HD150 Bass Combo
9008 - Hartke HMH112C Bass Combo
9279 - Hartke Kickback 15 Bass Amp Combo

Mark Bass

9004 - Markbass 121 Lite Alain Caron Combo
6239 - Mark Bass CMD102P Bass Combo
5472 - Mark Bass CMD151P J Berlin 300W,1x15
13279 - MarkBass Markacoustic AC601 Combo
6240 - Mark Bass Mini CMD121P (300W,1x12)
5474 - Mark Bass Mini CMD151P (300W,1x15W)
5475 - Mark Bass CMD121H (300W, 1x12)
9940 - Markbass Mini CMD 151 Jeff Berlin
9938 - MicroMark 801 Bass Combo

Orange

5234 - Orange Crush PiX 25BX (25W, 1x8)
5233 - Orange Crush PiX 50BXT (50W, 1x12)
15111 - Orange OB1 300 Combo

Roland

6320 - Roland CB100 (100W, 1x12)
4433 - Roland CB120XL Cube 120X (120w,1x12)
4435 - Roland Cube 20XL BASS (20W, 1x8)
4434 - Roland Cube 60XL (60W, 1x10)
5678 - Roland Microcube Bass RX, (5W, 4x4)
15433 - Vox Pathfinder 10 Bass

Bass Heads

15176 - Ashdown ABM1200-EVO IV 1200w Bass Head
14618 - Aguilar Tone Hammer 500 Bass Amp Head
13641 - Aguilar Tone Hammer 500 Bass Head
15115 - ABM 600 EVO IV 600W Ashdown Bass Head
15177 - Ashdown ABM600RC EVO IV 600W Rack
13192 - Ashdown Five 15 BBH 220w Big Boy Head
14171 - Ashdown RM220 Rootmaster Bass Amp Head
15179 - Ashdown RM500 EVO 500w Rootmaster Head
14531 - Ashdown RM800 Rootmaster Bass Amp Head
14553 - Ashdown Retroglide 800 Compact Bass Head
13200 - Eden E300 Bass Amplifier
13566 - Eden EGRW1264 Head & Cab Package
13198 - Eden WTX500 Bass Amp Head
15484 - Fender Bass Man 800
9349 - Hartke HA2500 Bass Head
9027 - Hartke Kilo 1000 Bass Head
12382 - Hartke LH1000 Bass Head
15588 - Hartke TX600 Bass Amplifier

Mark Bass

14828 - Mark Bass Nano Mark 300 Bass Amp Head
10408 - MarkBass Bass MultiAmp Stereo
6243 - Mark Bass Little Mark III Bass Head 500w
9035 - Markbass Little Mark III Tube Bass Head
5244 - MarkBass Little Mark Tube 800, 800W
7962 - Markbass TTE500 Randy Jackson Bass Head
9256 - Markbass Big Bang 500W Bass Head
9941 - Markbass Little Mark 250 Head Black
15271 - Markbass Little Mark Ninja Bona Head
9944 - Markbass MultiAmp
15151 - Markbass Randy Jackson TTE501 Bass Head
9725 - Markbass TTE801 Randy Jackson Bass Head
15109 - Orange 4 Stroke 300 Bass Amp
15110 - Orange 4 Stroke 500 Bass Amp
6261 - Orange AD200 MK3
8231 - Orange Dark Terror Valve Guitar Head

Bass Cabinets

13640 - Aguilar SL112 Bass Cabinet

Ashdown Engineering

15191 - Ashdown AAA 115T 200w 1 x 15" Cabinet
5677 - Ashdown ABM810 (8x10)
6457 - Ashdown ABM115 Compact (1x15)
15178 - Ashdown ABM210H EVO IV 300w 2 x 10"
15460 - Ashdown ABM210H NEO
6456 - Ashdown ABM410H (4x10)
15185 - Ashdown RM210T EVO 300w 2 x 10" Cab
15183 - Ashdown RM 112T EVO 300w 1 x 12" Cab
15184 - Ashdown RM 115T EVO 300w 1 x 15" Cab
14172 - Ashdown RM210T Bass Cab
15186 - Ashdown RM 610T EVO 900w 6 x 10" Cab
14196 - Blackstar HT Metal 412A Extension Cab
13566 - Eden EGRW1264 Head & Cab Package
13197 - Eden EX112 Compact Bass Cab
13195 - Eden EX210 Bass Cab
13199 - Eden EX410 Bass Cabinet
13201 - Eden EX410SC Bass Cabinet
14254 - Hartke 210XL 2 x 10" Bass Cab
9007 - Hartke HCH112 Bass Cab
15629 - Hartke HyDrive 115 Bass Cabinet

Mark Bass

6241 - Mark Bass STD102HF (2x10)
6242 - Mark Bass STD104HF (4x10)
5477 - Mark Bass STD151HR (1x15)
9033 - Markbass Traveler 121H Bass Ext Cab
9034 - Markbass Traveler 151 P Bass Guitar Cab
4733 - Mark Bass Traveller TRV102P (2x10)
5431 - Mark Bass NY121 New York 1x 12 Bass Cab
10412 - Markbass NY122 2 x 12 Bass Cab
10409 - Markbass NY151 1 x 15 Bass Cab
10410 - Markbass NY151 RJ 1 x 15" Randy Jackson
15272 - Markbass New York 122 Ninja Bona Cab
6259 - Orange OBC115 (1x15)
14484 - Orange OBC210 Mini Compact Bass Cab
6260 - Orange OBC410H (4x10)
5241 - Orange OBC810 (8x10)

THE MU

Online session work explained by the Musicians' Union

Online session work is a fast-growing income stream for professional players who can cut out the middle men, and get directly to the customer. "Even if you're an ambitious and talented young player, it's still hard to break into the established fixer or contractors' books," says MU sessions official Pete Thoms. "This way, you can market yourself directly to the clients without waiting for a fixer to recognise your ability." You can work from home, which cuts out travel and other expenses, and record until you are happy with the job done.

New ways of working

But it's not just emerging musicians who are getting into the online fray. Many more established players are getting into it too, able to complete more than one commission a day, arrange sessions at their own convenience, and send completed audio files to their engager in seconds. It makes life easier for engagers too – they can get a full service for a single price agreed in advance without any fuss at all.

How to get started

There is no single definitive route into online session work, but just as with face-to-face studio recording, there's a lot that you can do to make yourself more employable. First of all, decide on exactly what it is you can offer. Do you have a specific style or range of instruments? Or are you quick at turning around short, high-quality jobs? When you've established your unique selling point, invest a little in your studio set-up. A decent DAW (digital audio workstation) is a must, as are the best microphones that you can afford – it will be worth it in the long run.

Ensure your website is clear about what you offer, how much you charge and the process for a customer to access your services. Credits detailing your past session work are always helpful. Include a comprehensive list of terms and conditions. Know and understand your brief, and set realistic fees that take into account your time, your experience and how long it takes to engineer and prepare files for transmission. Where possible, request payment in advance. The MU's recommended minimum rates are a good starting point if you're new to session playing and don't know what kind of fee you should ask for.

It's important to set fair terms and expectations from the outset. Get an agreement in writing that details what you and the client have agreed to. It is likely you will be working for people who you don't know and will never meet, so establishing a clear framework can help avoid any misunderstandings and encourage them to recommend you to other potential clients.

Terms and conditions

Often the future use of the recording may not be known, so effectively you may be granting all rights in all media unless you specify some limitation in your agreement with the client. If you play on what you were initially informed was only a recording session and the music ends up in a film or advert, you need to be clear that further use of this type is not covered by your agreement. If you're an MU member, the easiest way to protect yourself is to get in touch with the Union and talk to one of our experts. MU members can use one of our consent forms to show they give consent to a producer or record label for their music to be used. You can also get contracts you are given checked over by our Contract Advisory Service – specialist solicitors with plenty of experience in the music industry – for no extra fee.

For specialist advice, including our contract advisory service and more on any aspect of being a musician, get in touch via **theMU.org**, **@WeAreTheMU** or **facebook.com/Musicians.Union**..

BASSCHAT

Silvia Bluejay discusses the bass you'll never sell

Despite indulging in our Gear Acquisition Syndrome, happily using our Marketplace to buy, sell and trade, and satisfying our bass-related curiosity by trying as many different instruments as we possibly can, every now and then we test our loyalty and ask ourselves awkward questions. One recurring query is: is there a bass among those we own that we'd never, ever sell? If yes, which one, and why?

A number of Basschatters say that there definitely is a bass in their arsenal that they would never get rid of, for one or more of a variety of reasons. The most common is emotional attachment – we usually loathe the idea of getting rid of our first ever bass, especially if we've owned it for decades; we generally find it unacceptable (or indeed rather unwise!) to sell a present from our parents or our spouse. In some cases, playing a certain bass saved the owner from going hungry in difficult times, so parting with it is out of the question.

There may be practical reasons for considering one of our instruments a keeper; it may be perfect for us in terms of looks, sound and playability – a custom build that we designed in minute detail, or a bass with exactly the right customisation added for our own benefit, or just a random lucky find. Some Basschatters own more than one instrument that they would never let go: they have achieved their own individual sound and playing style on those basses, and consider them their 'musical DNA', part of their identity, and no more likely to be replaced than the data on their owner's passport.

A bass may be a 'forced' keeper when it isn't worth enough money for us to bother selling it; it may have been a very cheap bass to start with, or it may be a 'bitsa' (an instrument put together by the owner from cheap parts of sundry provenance) of very little interest to anyone else. If we do decide to get rid of such instruments, we usually prefer to give them away to fellow Basschatters through our Recycling forum, or offer them as charity raffle prizes.

Even if a bass wasn't cheap to start with, once we've heavily customised it to our taste, it may be worth a lot more to us than we would get if we sold it, so it stays. We may also stop ourselves from selling certain instruments, because it would be impossible to find the equivalent when we inevitably realise the error of our ways, or join a band with specific requirements.

So far, so sensible. However, other Basschatters hold a different view. They have decided, out of bitter experience, that any promise never to sell a certain instrument is simply a lie. They have sold every single 'perfect' bass they had solemnly sworn to keep forever, and know they will do so again in a heartbeat on meeting the next 'perfect' instrument. They are resigned to the fact that the flesh is weak and Gear Acquisition Syndrome is mighty.

Taking that to its logical conclusion, some of us prefer to believe that 'keepers' simply do not exist, and that all instruments are just a means to an end that get replaced when the musician's needs – real or perceived – change. Fickle or realistic? Where do you stand on this? Tell us!

www.basschat.co.uk

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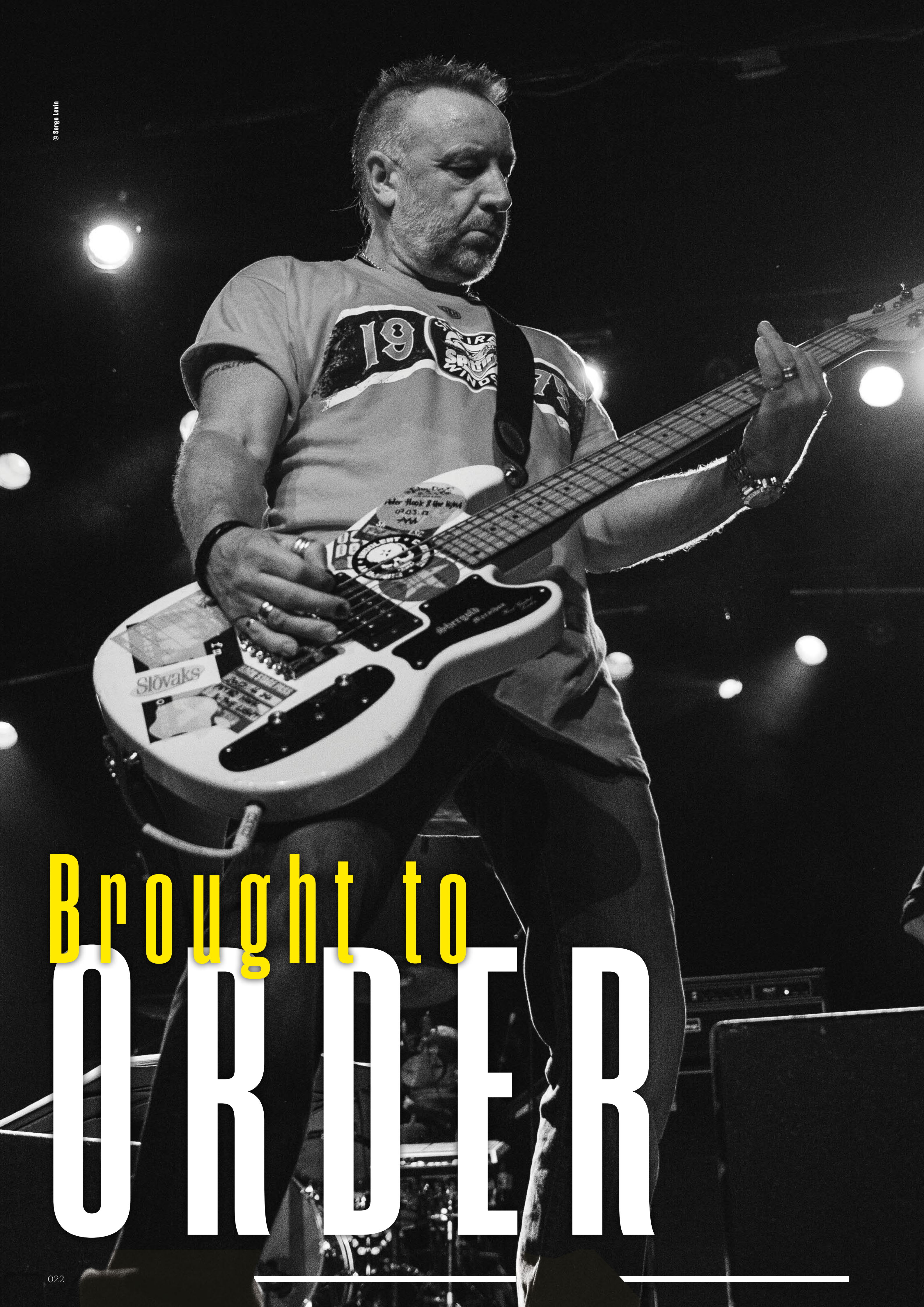

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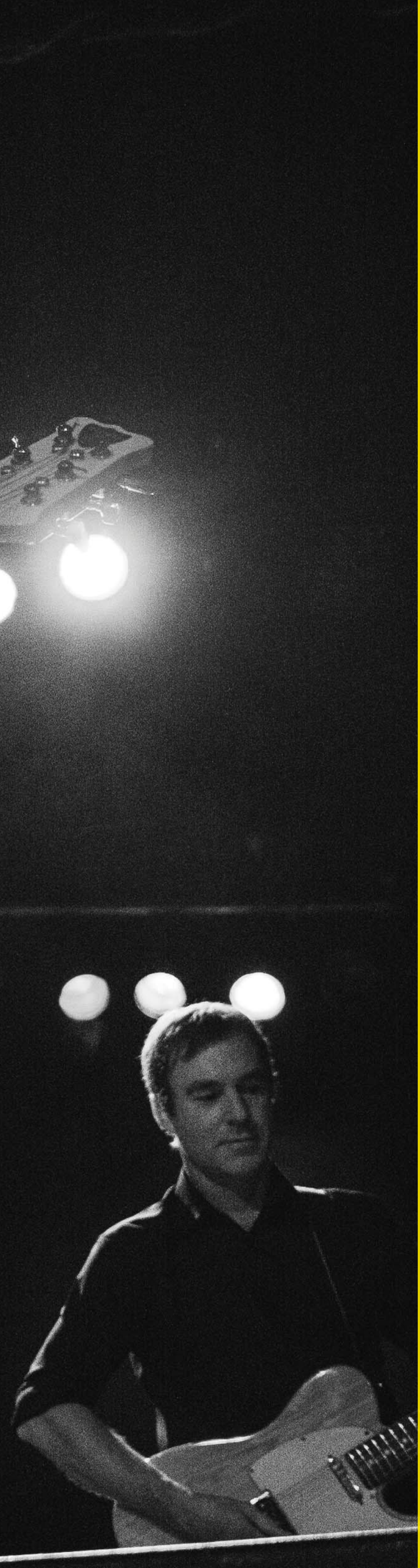
Brought to ORDER



Peter Hook, sometime of Joy Division and New Order, returns with a new autobiography. Jennifer Otter Bickerdike meets the great man for a chat about the past, present and future of his career as an iconic bassist

BGM meets Peter Hook at the Forum in Kentish Town, London, before a sold-out show with his band, the Light, with whom Hooky is currently on tour playing the entirety of New Order's 1987 album *Substance* and 1988's Joy Division compilation of the same name. He looks trim, relaxed and ready to talk about his new book, *Substance: Inside New Order*, which hit stores in October.

During our interview, my inner 13-year-old superfan escapes several times, and while bass is obviously the mainstay of our conversation, I have to ask him if there's any hope of an original New Order line-up reunion despite a falling-out and lawsuit between Hook and the other members, Gillian Morris, Stephen Morris and Bernard Sumner. Read on and find out...

Why was it important for you to write *Substance: Inside New Order*?
I was reluctant to write it, actually, because we [the members of New Order] always pretended that everything was OK. Now I'm saying that everything wasn't OK and we were lying.

Was this a response to Bernard's 2014 book, *Chapter And Verse: New Order, Joy Division And Me*?
No, I started before Bernard's. The interesting thing about Bernard's book, in my opinion, is that he can't say anything about Steve and Gillian because he's still working with them. I don't have that luxury. I can say whatever I want about anybody. But he was compromised because the only person he could have a go at [in his book] was me, which he did very successfully on 69 pages out of the 100 that he devoted to 31 years of New Order. I couldn't believe how a man of his talents, with the amount he's put into modern-day music, culture and heritage, could talk so little about himself and want to focus on me. I take it as a great compliment, actually.

Was it cathartic writing it?
Yes. Writing the book, I realised that we had a fantastic 10 years: we really did. New Order were a complete by-product of the 80s. We started in May 1980, and we finished in June 1990 with the World Cup song, 'World In Motion'. It was incredible. Before Bernard began his reign of terror, we had a fantastic time. Andrew Holmes, my co-author, describes the book as the chronicles of a despotic takeover. It's very sad. The reason [it is written like this] is not to make people sad: it's to tell the story. And it's 100 per cent the truth. Now I know a lot of people are not going to like that, especially the ones in New Order, but it is the truth.

What do you recall of leaving the band?
The sad thing about 2011 was that Bernard, Stephen and Gillian decided to take the group off me. Unfortunately, they didn't realise that they couldn't take the music off me. Really, it's the music that people love, not the group. The group doesn't do anything until they play the music. So they miscalculated. By playing the music and staying true to [New Order's original] ethos that we started with, the Light have won over. As much as I hate to say it, we've got more passion, more enthusiasm for what we do than them lot will ever have. And I know that for a fact. I was with them for 31 fucking years. We got to a period when Bernard wouldn't work: he wanted to do as little as possible. And that meant not changing the set-list at all. I'm delighted to see they don't do it now. They play the same set over and over again.

"THE INTERESTING THING ABOUT BERNARD'S BOOK, IN MY OPINION, IS THAT HE CAN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT STEVE AND GILLIAN BECAUSE HE'S STILL WORKING WITH THEM. I DON'T HAVE THAT LUXURY. I CAN SAY WHATEVER I WANT ABOUT ANYBODY"

Why did you feel it was important to include timelines and detailed elements about various gear?
If I read someone's book, and they have shit like that in it, I love it. To me, it's the mark of a great book. It's called doing your homework, tying up the loose ends, and making sure that everything sits right.

How did you remember all the stories so well?
Now that I'm sober, the stories came back to me. The timeline was the best thing for remembering the stories.

It was hard to read some of your recollections in the book about revered folks like Rob Gretton [manager of Joy Division and New Order] and Gillian Morris. Was it a difficult decision to include these?
It was tough. Especially writing about Gillian. Because we had never admitted that she had never written much [for New Order]. It was quite the sad position for me to be in. As I said in the book, we [Hook and Gillian] actually got very close for [1993 album] *Republic*. I felt bad doing it. They were tricky calls, but when it comes down to it, you're writing a book, and she is perfectly entitled to write her own book, as Bernard did, as Steve is at the moment. You can tell your version of the truth. I suppose it's for people to decide who's telling the truth and where the truth lies.

What do you think the other members' reaction will be to the book?
I think they'll go fucking crazy [laughs]. Well, it is the truth. We actually got offered a million pounds to do a book as New Order. We sat there and thought about it. We realised that nobody is going to be able to say anything about anyone else because it would be in the book, and you can't say it while you are together. It would be a shit book, so we didn't do it.

If you were offered a ludicrous amount of money to play an event with the rest of New Order, would you?
[laughs] Of course I would. Without a doubt. When it comes down to it, I'm a businessman. If the Eagles can do it, then I can bloody do it. That tour wasn't called The Hell Freezes Over Tour for nothing! I do think you can respect people's talent. And you can also respect their professionalism. You don't have to get along.

Let's talk bass. First off, what kind of bass do you use?
I use a custom-made Eccleshall – it's a copy of an EB-O1 semi-acoustic Gibson with Yamaha BB 1200 pickups. I've used it for a long time.

To slap or not to slap?
I went through a phase when Don Johnson from A Certain Ratio tried to teach me to slap. He gave me a couple of lessons, then he just turned to me and went, 'Hooky, you're white'. And I thought, well, that needs no further explanation, does it really?

What makes a great bass player?
The secret to playing bass well is just meaning it. You have to *mean* what you play. When I started to play the bass, I never got any of those connotations because of punk that you were somehow behind the guitarist. The idea that the bass player backs the guitarist and plays the root elements. Fuck off! Not any bass player from Salford that I know. You have to make the bass do what *you* want it to do, and not do what other people 'think' a bass should do. That has to be the secret.

Which other basses have you enjoyed over the years?
My favourite bass ever is the Yamaha BB 1200, which was one of those wonderful accidents of being perfectly crafted, and perfectly balanced, made by an obvious artist of guitars. They've never bettered it. They could do worse than just going back to that concept. But the thing is, I don't want everyone to sound like me, so I shouldn't really be saying this.

Yamaha actually gave me their new, top-of-the-range flagship bass to compare to the BB 1200. And I did. They said, 'Can you send the review in?' I said, 'I can give it to you over the phone if you like.' The rep said, 'Okay, right. Let me get a pen.' And I said, 'You won't need a pen. It's shit.' He said, 'Can I ask why?' I said, 'It has a bolt-on neck, the pickup sounds dreadful. It's just a crappy sound,

"THE SECRET TO PLAYING BASS WELL IS JUST MEANING IT. YOU HAVE TO *MEAN* WHAT YOU PLAY. WHEN I STARTED TO PLAY THE BASS, I NEVER GOT ANY OF THOSE CONNOTATIONS — BECAUSE OF PUNK — THAT YOU WERE SOMEHOW BEHIND THE GUITARIST"

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VIKING 1

mate. It has bad electrics.' And he said, 'Well, we probably won't ask you to review it then. You can keep it.' Lucky me...

Tell us something about your bass playing that you've never revealed before.

One thing I didn't put in the book was about my picks. When I started [writing it], I put everything else in, about the basses, about the equipment, and the guitars. My picks were a millimetre thick: I used to tear off the strings on the bass. I was young and mad. You don't need a compressor because you're hitting it so hard, and your pick is so hard, there's no level drop. My record for snapping strings was three at once! They were white, and they had serrated edges: they weren't smooth. You get a lot of grip for when you are sweating. They were the best thing ever. I stockpiled about 600. All gone – and they've stopped making them, so now I have to use a 0.8 millimetre pick. They actually started to give me pains because it was so hard on my finger, but it was great for me at the time.

"WITH A COMPUTER, YOU FIX EVERYTHING. IT'S REALLY BORING. 'BLUE MONDAY' IS LITTERED WITH MISTAKES. THEY MAKE IT SOUND UNIQUE."

What are your ambitions for 2017?

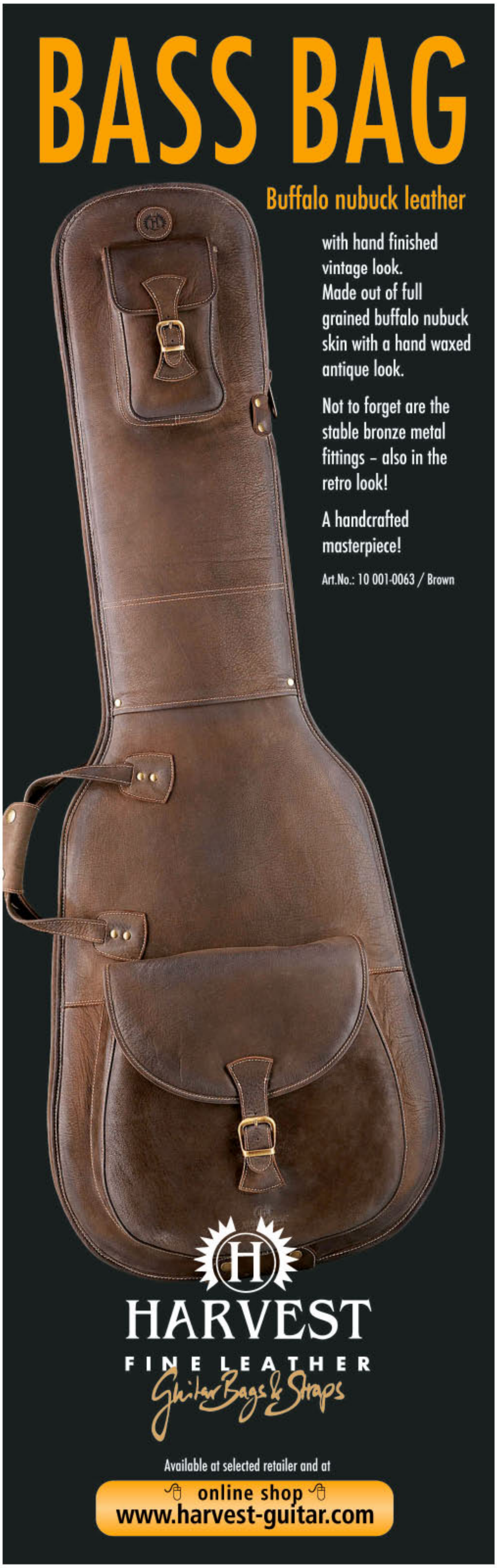
My ambitions are to get rid of this legal fight [with the other original members of New Order]. It's been the hardest thing I've ever done. Andy Rourke and Mike Joyce [of the Smiths] said to me that the worst thing to ever happen to them in their lives was that legal battle with Johnny Marr and Morrissey. I was thinking, could it be that bad? Fuck me, they were actually under-exaggerating. It's terrible. It's been absolutely awful. I want to get rid of it, and get my life back.

After that, what's next for you musically?

I miss writing, I really do. I miss not being in a group, which is something I never thought I'd say. I miss not hammering it out in the practice room. I miss that wonderful feeling when you get a song. Rob Gretton, for all his failings, was a great man. He always used to say to us, 'The best thing you're going to write is the next one. Forget the rest. It's all about the next one.'

To get back to the Light, my idea is to celebrate the albums. As New Order, I never got to play Joy Division's music anyway, so I'm happy to get that back. New Order ignored most of the music for a long, long time. My idea is to help the fans celebrate it, by being true to the records. In my mind, we got away from a lot of the true essence of New Order. By staying true to what the records are, the way the mistakes are with the records, the tracks have a really idiosyncratic, unique feeling that you can't replicate with a computer. With a computer, you fix everything. It's really boring. 'Blue Monday' is littered with mistakes. They make it sound unique.

***Substance: Inside New Order* is out now on Simon & Schuster. Info: www.peterhook.co.uk.**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G-MAN

Sometime Deep Purple, Black Sabbath and Black Country Communion bassist Glenn Hughes returns with a killer new album. Mike Brooks meets him

With a new album, *Resonate*, primed and ready for release, talk of a reformation of the supergroup Black Country Communion on the cards and touring across all four corners of the globe into 2017, Glenn Hughes is rapidly earning this year's 'Hardest Working Man In Showbusiness' award. Not that he'd mind: having come back from recent heart and knee surgery, he's simply happy to be making music and performing for his legions of supporters around the world.

When you own one of the most distinctive singing voices in rock, as well as being a revered bassist to boot, it would be a crime not to share it with the wider world, something he intends to do over the next year and beyond. "I'm really excited about this new album, because I consider it a return to what a lot of people have been waiting for from me since [2005's] *Soul Mover*," he tells us. "I've never bowed down to the god of money or done things to service my pocket, and I've always been a bit of a wanderer, so to return to the roots of my music, British rock music, is a really refreshing thing. I've known for the last 10 years or so that my upbringing and early years playing rock music would bring me back to this point."

Resonate is certainly a return to form, with rock-solid grooves, blistering guitar work and a voice that could charm the

Pic by Arnie Goodman

Pic by Gavin Lowery

birds out of the trees. The album isn't short of fine bass playing, either: on tracks such as 'Flow', we're presented with some seriously overdriven bass tones – all amp-generated as Glenn will attest. "I only use Orange amps, all the way. I used a little Fuzz Vibe towards the end of 'Flow' to crank it up a little more, particularly on the last sequence, but otherwise the rest of the album was just using the amp, no effects or pedals at all. The AD200 amp sounds like it was made for me. In my opinion, it is truly the greatest sounding live amp, very similar in tone to the Hiwatt amps I used in Deep Purple."

Glenn is now also using signature basses courtesy of Yamaha, a design that has been in the melting pot for some time. "Yamaha have been working on this bass for quite a while," he says. "They first approached me 10 years ago, and they made one that wasn't quite right, so last year they came to me again, I visited the factory on three or four occasions and we ironed the details out. I chose the colours and the design. It's only seven and a half pounds in weight, so it's very light, but it doesn't sound like it's light. I really get my sound and tone from two single-coil pickups, so that's what is there, along with extra frets in the upper range. I'm in love with these basses. I always go for the resonance of an instrument, be it a guitar or a bass: even before it's plugged in, I know if it's going to sound good or not. I get so many people sending me basses. It's great, they send me stuff all the time – but I really wanted a bass that sounds like 'me', and this one really does."

Resonate also features an appearance from Red Hot Chili Peppers drummer Chad Smith. "I'm godfather to one of his kids and we're the closest of friends: Chad and I finish each other's sentences," says Glenn. "When we play together, he's insanely animalistic and his pocket is so good. It's a joy to play with someone who is so musical, and he always brings so much love, as well as being a very funny guy. He just gets me. He came in at the end of the album to do 'Heavy' and 'Long Time Gone': I played them to him once and he was on it. You can see that in the video for 'Heavy', which may have been the first or second take. It was good for Pontus [Engborg, Glenn's regular drummer] to see that because he's young and a well-educated drummer, full of energy like a younger Chad. I haven't had that many drummers in my solo bands, maybe three or four. I develop a groove with them before we get into solos and stuff but I'm really interested in drummers who have pocket, understand that less is more and are soulful as people."

The new album also marks a return to old-school production values. As Glenn explains: "The whole Pro Tools thing, for me, is not the way forward, because you lose the essence of 'liveness'. This album harks back to how I used to make records in the early 70s and it's how I want to make records now. The whole album was cut totally live: if anyone makes a mistake, we start again, we don't drop in or fix things. It was like that with Black Country Communion as well. You can hear a live experience, the volatile aspect of all the instruments: it's bombastic, in your face and there's plenty of light and shade, which is what we were aiming for – a bass-driven album with an amazing band. The album was written while I was recovering from knee surgery but I didn't play the tracks to the guys until I got to the studio. The vocals are all first or second takes; we wrote, recorded and mixed the whole album in 17 days."

The past year has been something of a rollercoaster for Glenn, which has affected the subjects of the new material. Life for this colourful troubadour is a rich vein of inspiration. "It's not an album written about fictitious things, but rather about the human condition and what happens to us as people," he says. "I got the material together over three months while I recuperated from knee surgery, having already undergone open heart surgery three years ago. Deep Purple were inducted into the Hall Of Fame on the same day my dad died. I really have no fear about telling people what is going on. I always say it's the secrets that will kill people: it's not good and healthy to have secrets. There's some anger on this album that hasn't been on there for a while, so I can be pissed off as much as being a loving person, but everyone knows I'm coming from a loving place. It's been a really weird but beautiful year for me: I'm in a really good head-space and I'm healthy."

> "I REALLY HAVE NO FEAR ABOUT TELLING PEOPLE WHAT IS GOING ON. I ALWAYS SAY IT'S THE SECRETS THAT WILL KILL PEOPLE: IT'S NOT GOOD AND HEALTHY TO HAVE SECRETS. THERE'S SOME ANGER ON THIS ALBUM THAT HASN'T BEEN ON THERE FOR A WHILE... BUT EVERYONE KNOWS I'M COMING FROM A LOVING PLACE"

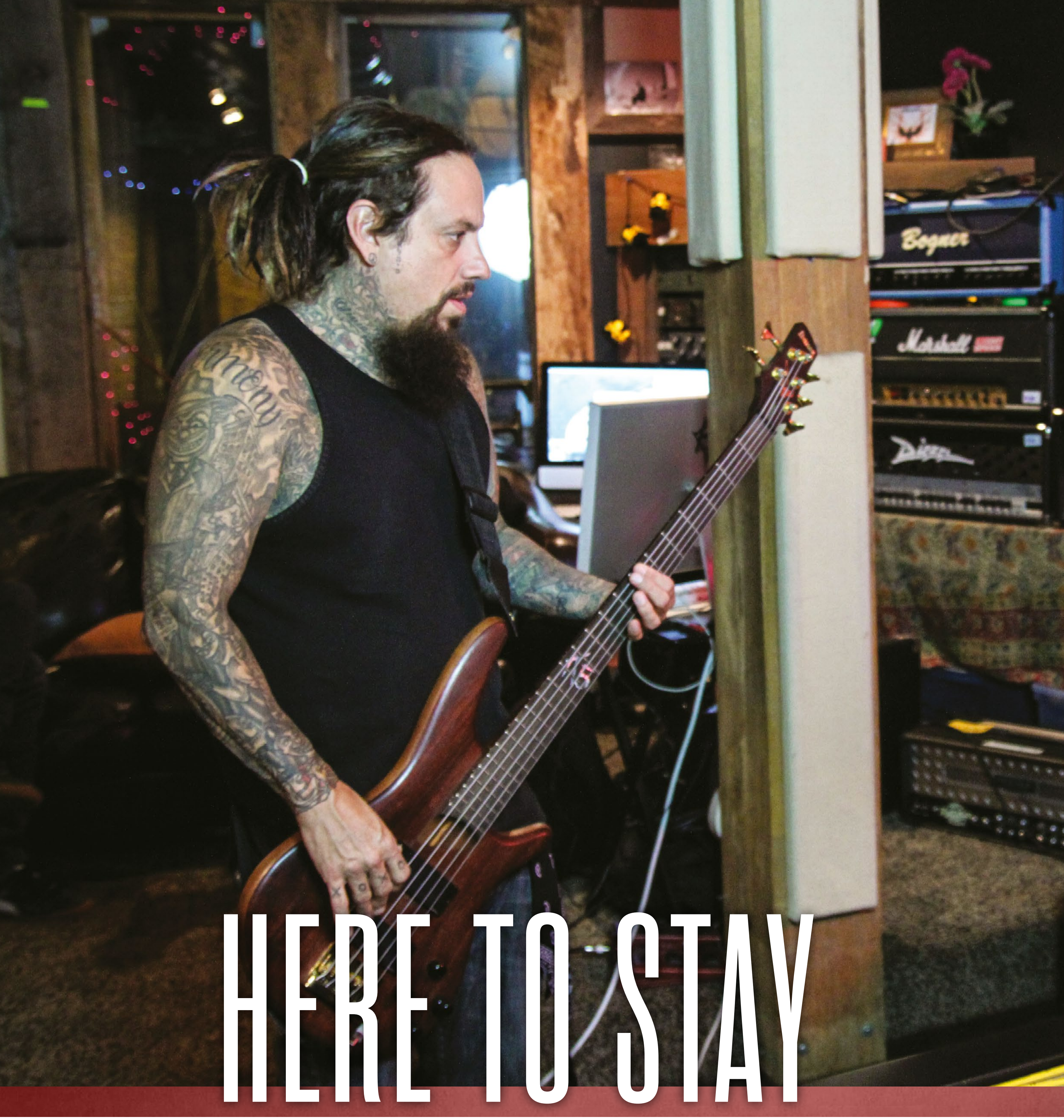
And what of Black Country Communion? Following the breakup of BCC after 2011's *Afterglow*, stories abounded of various spats and skirmishes between Glenn and legendary guitarist Joe Bonamassa. According to Glenn there was nothing of the sort. "There was never any fighting or yelling or screaming," he says. "I think certain people – kids, fans, call them what you will – thought there was trouble, but there really wasn't. After the release of *Afterglow*, when we didn't tour and it was obvious we weren't going to be able to, it was clear that it was time to stop. Joe made it clear in a very nice way that his career was solo, as I also was back then. We had a big debut album, and then a big second album, and we toured in 2011 after the second album, some 30 shows, which was great. *Afterglow* was going to be my next album, but Kevin [Shirley, producer] suggested making it the next BCC album and maybe we could do some touring with it – but it wasn't to be."

However, common sense has prevailed: the original BCC line-up is refreshed and ready to restart. Glenn explains that the band-members were always aware that they could come back to BCC at some point. "Kevin called me a year after *Afterglow* to see if I was ready to do another album and I said, 'Well, not at this very moment', as [promising but short-lived rock trio] California Breed was just starting. Then, around the time I was being inducted with DP into the Hall Of Fame, Joe gave me a call and asked if we could have dinner. I said 'Of course', and we got onto talking about BCC, how we loved our band and how it would be great to do another record. We're going to make it a killer album – all killer, no filler. We're writing at the moment, we've got a lot of great new songs and we're heading into the studio in January with an album release in May."

With tours of South America, the UK and Europe still to complete in 2016, promotion for the new album, further touring into 2017 and the new BCC album, it doesn't look like the rolling stone that is Glenn Hughes will be gathering moss any time soon. "It's been a good ride for me of late," he agrees. "I've lived the life of 20 men, as you can imagine, but I really understand that things happen in God's time, not my time. I'm at the right crossroads at the moment, where things are going really smoothly due to the fact that I'm letting other people run my show for me. I have to be a nostalgic artist because I'm 65 – but I don't want to be put in that bracket, because this new album is not in any way, shape or form sounding like it's dated. This is an album that can, and should, be played."

Too true, Mr Hughes – and loud.

***Resonate* is out now on Frontiers Music. Glenn is currently touring the UK.**
Info: www.glennhughes.com

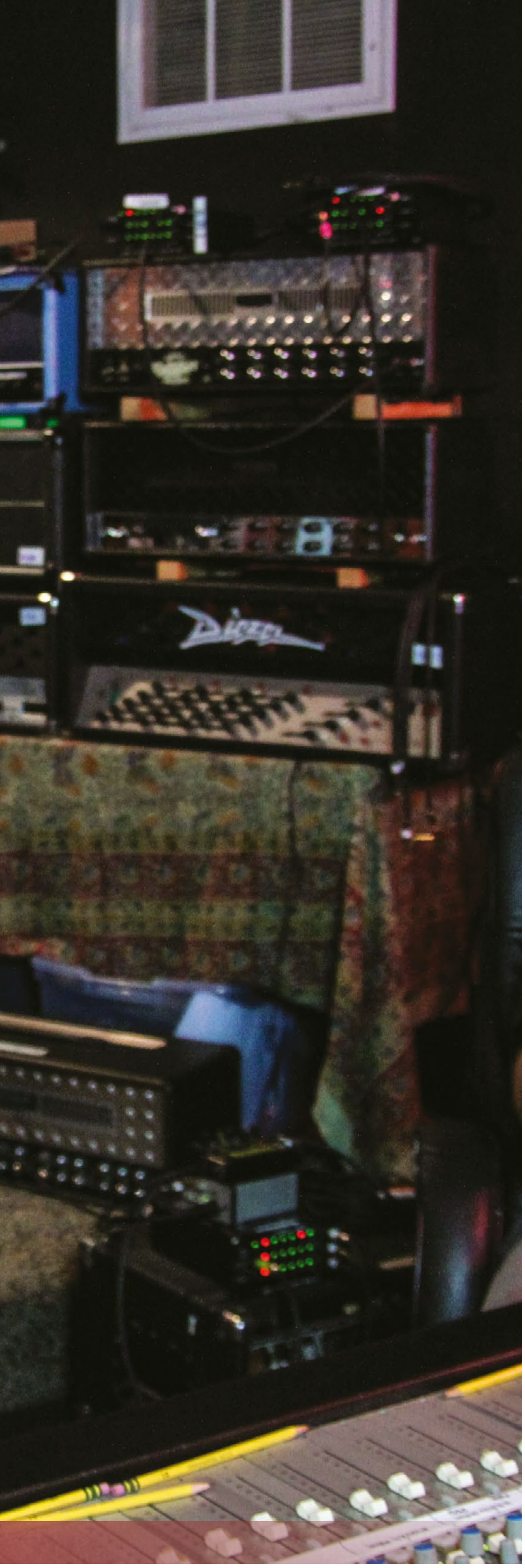


HERE TO STAY

Reginald 'Fieldy' Arvizu of nu-metal titans Korn returns with album number 12, *The Serenity Of Suffering*. Hywel Davies catches up with the man with the 15-string bass

Musicians who break the rules are remembered, but those who change the game are immortalised. Back in 1994, Reginald 'Fieldy' Arvizu of Californian nu-metal godfathers Korn achieved just that. His band's monumental self-titled debut album took heavy music to the darkest corner of the human psyche, but still managed to top the charts. Over 35 million record sales later, Fieldy and band are showing no signs of slowing down.

For 22 years, Fieldy has slapped out some of the most concussive bass-lines ever conceived on the instrument, in a completely original style. On Korn's twelfth album, *The Serenity Of Suffering*, his trademark thumbed lines are at front and centre. "Nick Raskulinecz, our producer, was like, 'I just want you to be Fieldy,' and I thought, 'Yeah all right, I can do that!'" he laughs. "I just do what I do. People want to hear what I do and I'm pretty happy about that. I really wanted to do things that were memorable. These days I'm figuring out how to unplay, because I find that when you do simpler things, people like it better. When I'm trying to play something, I really want to make it count and make it really fun so you'd want to play air bass to it."



"WHAT THEY WERE DOING WAS TASTEFUL AND MEMORABLE, WHICH I LOVE: IT KIND OF GAVE ME THAT MOMENT TO SHINE"

Raskulinecz worked closely with Fieldy to bring out the thunderous rattle that has been a staple of Korn's sound since their formation back in 1993. As one of the top producers in his field, Raskulinecz showed a true understanding of Fieldy's role, says the bassist.

"Working with him was pretty amazing. He was a fan growing up: he wasn't a producer who just wanted to produce Korn, he knew all about us. He really wanted to capture who we were, our sound and what Korn was all about. He had an old-school, traditional way of doing things."

He adds: "When I finally got up to the studio for the first time, it was a really old studio in the middle of nowhere. I walked in and he had an Ampeg with 8x10 single cabinets there all set up ready for me. I had my bass all plugged in, turned the volume up and I just slapped the top string and I was like, 'Wow, that sounds exactly like my tone.' It was perfect, I didn't even have to touch a knob. He did his research and had us dialled. I think he had my bass tone dialled better than I could have done it. That being said right there, working with him from then on, he just got it."

What other equipment does he use on the new album, *BGM* asks? "I use my Ibanez K-5, because Nick was really pushing on keeping things consistent and I don't really like switching basses. I play the same bass all the way throughout, and it sounded so good this time around. I have a bunch of K-5s that we went through, but we found this older one and it ended up sounding the best out of all of them."

Asked about any effects he may have used on the album, Fieldy replies: "I just did straight bass. I'm open to using them and I used to run four or five different pedals and blend them. The guys have been pushing for it here and there, and wanted to hear some effects from me. When the time's right, then I'll probably pull some out. That might be the next round, I'm always open to new ideas."

How does he achieve the famous rattle that drives his fans into a state of frenzy, we wonder? "Honestly, I think it has to do with where you are slapping it up. I slap just in front of the second pickup before the fretboard. Right in that area there's a bounce where you can really hit it without damaging anything. The action on my strings is pretty high too," he continues. "I think that gives you more of that rumble. People trip out when they see me pick up my bass and they say things like, 'You actually play with your action that high?' And I'm all like, 'Yeah!' I like to slam on the strings – I like to hit them hard on the bass so I can get that rumble."

Fieldy has used DR's line of neon strings in the past, but it would seem that these have served their purpose, as he explains: "I did the whole neon-coloured strings on the Korn and Rob Zombie tour [in early 2016]. Since we've been touring with Breaking Benjamin I've changed it up and I've been using white bass strings instead. They're really cool but they took me a while to get, because I remember asking DR for a set, but they said that they couldn't make those strings. Eventually when I got them, I put them on my black bass which I'm using right now. I'm going for a serious look, I guess!"

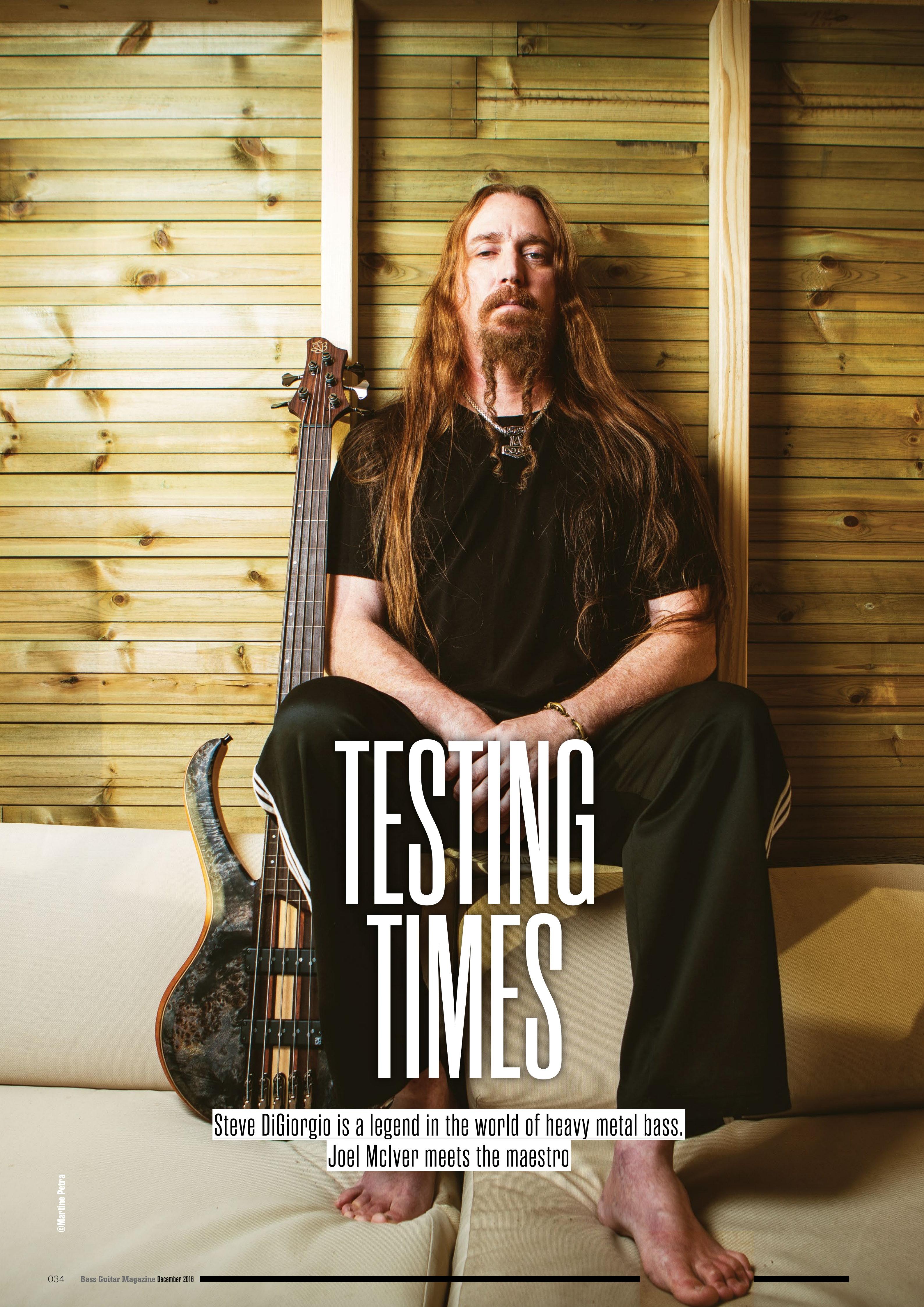
Fans and critics usually agree that Korn's third album, 1998's *Follow The Leader*, was the band's landmark work, securing their place as metal icons. The second single from the album, 'Got The Life', was a frantic, groove-laden belter that embodies everything that is Fieldy. The percussive slap-strum pattern of the verse with unqualified syncopation has had bass players drooling for 18 years. It's hard to believe that it almost didn't make the cut, as Fieldy tells *BGM*.

"It was hard for me at the time because when 'Head' [Brian Welch, guitar] and 'Munky' [James Shaffer, guitar] do something really simple like that, I'm kind of forced to do something busy, something faster, and so I had room to mess around with that song," he says. "What they were doing was tasteful and memorable, which I love: it kind of gave me that moment to shine. At the time we all thought it was a weird song. None of us really liked it: we didn't even want to put it on the album. It's mind-blowing, the one song we really didn't like was one of our biggest songs."

Which songs does he like to bust out live? "I would have to say 'Dead Bodies Everywhere' is one of my favourites, for sure. It has a lot of cool bass stuff going on: there are some simple parts, some busy parts, it kind of has every flavour. As of right now, 'Rotting In Vain' is going over really good live: people are really going nuts for it. There isn't a lot going on, but the rhythm of it is just super fun to play."

When Fieldy appeared in *BGM* back in 2014, there was mention of a solo bass album titled *Bassically*. The waiting game might finally be over, he tells us. "I'm going on seven years working on this album and finally I'll be done next week! It just needs to go to the mixer and it will be done in November. It's all me, playing a bunch of different basses, plus two drummers, Ray [Luzier] from Korn and Noah Bernardo from POD. I got lead basses, rhythm basses, just all kinds of basses going – I've been trying to fill everything up with just bass. It's going to be a fun album to listen to, man. Maybe it will inspire some of my favourite bass players to put one out too."

***The Serenity Of Suffering* is out now via Roadrunner.**
Info: www.korn.com



TESTING TIMES

Steve DiGiorgio is a legend in the world of heavy metal bass. Joel McIver meets the maestro

©Martine Petra

Readers of the headbanging persuasion will be familiar with Steve DiGiorgio from his playing on classic albums by Death, Sadus, Control Denied, Iced Earth and his current gig with Bay Area thrash metal veterans Testament, but non-metal-consuming types should pay attention to his work too. Equally happy on the fretless bass when metal is usually devoted to the precise sound delivered by a fretted instrument, and accustomed to playing outside the conventional box to the extent that he regularly plays a custom three-string, the Illinois-born bassist is a man for all seasons.

DiGiorgio's most recent appearance is on Testament's new album *Brotherhood Of The Snake*, out as you read this. We caught up with the great man as the album dropped...

How was the recording process on the new album, Steve?

The more you record the better you get at it, because you can anticipate problems before they come along, but Testament have three decades of expectations to live up to and they don't want to let their fans down, so the pressure to deliver a good album is obviously still there. At the age we are, you don't want to come out with some new, experimental change of direction; you want to give them what they're expecting. It's easy enough to say, but it's hard because you don't want to sound rehashed but you want to play to your patented formula. From my point of view, recording the bass was pretty quick: I took the time to go through different bass guitars that I own, because I wanted to bring a Testament bass sound to the record instead of something more personalised. Once I found the right bass with the right sound, it was easy to dial it in and match with the other instruments.

What gear did you use this time out?

For the recording I used a 1978 Rickenbacker 4001: it's 100 per cent stock. There's nothing modified about it, it's just a vintage passive bass. I used Dunlop Superbright strings, which are properly named: they're really bright, which in my opinion is what a good metal bass sounds like. The Rickenbacker has that really vocal sound, in the neighbourhood of that Chris Squire growl.

You were previously a member of Testament for their 1999 album *The Gathering*. What's changed since then, bass-wise?

Back then I was using a Carvin five-string fretless, and it sounded great at the time, but I've improved on that sound over the years and the new sound fits the role a little better. *The Gathering* was a brand-new experience because I just met the guys at the time. I wasn't trying to push for a lot of creativity for that reason. We were using a big old analogue board and I think the bass was pushed to the margin a little bit, because the drums needed a lot of work and there was a lot to think about, so some of the bass stuff that could have shone was lost. Now that I've come back to the band with the chance to record a whole new chapter, I made sure I did it right. I made the bass fit the band: I didn't need the bass to sound like 'me'. I was up for that challenge and I didn't want to limit myself.

What else are you working on apart from Testament?

There's a lot going on. We have an extensive touring schedule, which is a great thing to have, but I've had to push back a lot of projects for that reason. There's no rest: I come back from touring and it's right back to the studio. I'm working on some music with a Greek singer called Christos, for example, and a death metal project with a Russian musician, and an album with the band Charred Walls Of The Damned. I was also in Norway a while back, working with the members of Spiral Architect in a band called Terra Odium. You can see a play-through video of one of the songs on my social media.

"THE MORE YOU RECORD THE BETTER YOU GET AT IT, BECAUSE YOU CAN ANTICIPATE PROBLEMS BEFORE THEY COME ALONG"

What gear are you currently playing?

The new Ibanez BTB1605 bass that I've been playing is amazing. I don't know what every bass player does in the studio, but I know there's generally a lot of processing going on, and the amazing thing about the playthrough I just mentioned is that it's completely direct apart from one compressor pedal, my EBS Multicomp, but the compression and gain are both just barely on. That's the complete amount of processing, so you can hear the natural sound of this Ibanez, which I'm in love with. Mine is a little special: they defretted it at the custom shop in LA and put in black hardware, and then hand-delivered it to me right in the middle of a Testament tour, which was an awesome gesture. I played it that same night and the band and the techs were looking at me, saying, 'You sound so much better!' It's made me sound better than I have in a long time.

What other basses do you own?

Back in the late 80s I built my own fretless bass out of Fender parts, which put me on the map when I played it on Death's album *Individual Thought Patterns*. I've modified so many other basses since then. I got a guy to tear the fretboard off a Rickenbacker and put a nice slab of ebony on there. I still play a Thor bass, that I modified from a five-string to a three-string: I took that around with me for years. That bass was in a Rotosound advert on the back of your magazine a few times, although as I said, I'm a Dunlop guy now.

What else do you use on stage?

I've been working really closely with EBS and Jerry Harvey Audio, who do the in-ear monitors which I've used on stage since I rejoined Testament. It's been complete heaven – with Death and Sadus it was always the old-fashioned wedge mix on stage, and usually the bass player gets shut out of that so we just turn our cabs up really loud and that pisses off the sound man. I've been in that situation forever, up until Testament. To have my own personalised mix in my ears every night has been amazing, and it's inspiring.

How is your hearing holding up after all these years of playing metal?

Fortunately, I've religiously worn earplugs since I was young, even at the risk of being made fun of in the early days. On the days that I didn't, I really didn't enjoy not being able to sleep because of that loud ringing in my ears, and the foam earplugs don't cut out all the bass so I could live with them quite happily. I rehearse with earplugs, I play gigs with earplugs and I wear earplugs when I go see a gig. Of course, there's been some loss over the years: as a live musician there's no getting away from that. But I may have saved a few frequencies at the top end from being such a stickler about it.

And the rest of you – shoulders, neck and so on?

ESP made a double-neck bass for me a few years ago and I felt the weight of it then, but apart from that, it's been okay because I'm a pretty big guy. I prefer the larger, bulkier instruments because they give me some leverage to let it rip. ■

Brotherhood Of The Snake **is out now on Nuclear Blast. Info: www.testamentlegions.com.**

BASH STREET KIDS

Silvia Bluejay reports from UK forum Basschat's 10th annual Bass Bash

The annual South East meetup – or 'Bash' – for Basschat members is the longest-running event we have: the first was in 2007, and there has been one every autumn ever since. It's held at the Jubilee High School in Addlestone and has always been the best attended among our events. It's ticketed, and all proceedings go to one or more charities chosen collectively by the attendees.

Organisers Silverfoxnik and Hamster, with help from OBBM and Hamster's wife Sarah, have worked hard throughout the years to make the day memorable. We have technical talks, well-known bassists giving interviews and Q&A sessions, large manufacturers showcasing their mouth-watering wares, small companies offering specialised services, bass-themed charity raffles, much ogling of gear, and there's always cake and pastries! We also use a separate room for jamming with a guest drummer; any multi-instrumentalist Basschatters can have a break from gear-stalking and take turns to improvise on bass or guitar on anything from simple blues to intricated jazz.

This year the organising team pulled out all the stops in order to make the 10th anniversary, held on 24 September, really special. We didn't just have the usual large hall in which to show off our rigs (as well as covet and try everybody else's), but also several smaller, 'quiet' rooms where it was possible to test at low volume or play acoustically.

As always in the last few years, D'Addario was among the manufacturers in attendance; its display of strings and related goodies, manned by much-loved Basschatter and UK marketing manager Andrew Needham, has become a welcome fixture at most of our bashes around the country. Then we had the Wal zone – our 'Wall of Wals'. We always have space (and a lot of time) for Wal basses, especially when, like this year, the amazing array of models and colours on display mostly consists of Basschatters' own beloved instruments. Paul Herman and Trevor Raggatt were there to answer questions and offer precious info.

Another Basschat-friendly manufacturer in attendance was the ever-youthful Alex Claber, head of Barefaced, who showcased his new tiny-but-powerful One Ten cab (alongside his older models) and gave a talk about distortion. He also offered his very first Big One prototype – a unique item and a piece of the company's history, complete with Certificate of Authenticity – as the first prize in the event's mega-raffle.

Bass Bashes are also designed to allow small or one-person companies, usually run by Basschatters with Affiliate status on the forum, to showcase their goods or specialised services. This year the South East Bash had TimAl with his Original Scratchplate Company, which doesn't just customise scratchplates but also speakers, drum-skins and accessories; regular presence OBBM was there with his high-quality Rock-wire cables, and luthier Ian Robinson came all the way from the South Coast to show us how to set up our instruments properly and become a better bassist.

The event was positively star-studded. John 'Rhino' Edwards of Status Quo was trying basses, posing for pictures and being his usual friendly self. Jools Holland's bassist Dave Swift, who supports the South East Bash whenever possible, was in his element, chatting about all things bass, and was spotted talking amplification with Alex Claber. John Bentley of Squeeze talked us through his bass-lines to the band's best known songs and the writing process behind them, and told us about life on tour.

Session super-pro Herbie Flowers had us in stitches with his anecdotes, tips, and pearls of wisdom from a lifetime spent playing bass in studios and on stage behind the likes of David Bowie, Elton John, David Essex, Clive Dunn, and just about everybody else. His multicoloured tuba made an appearance too! Herbie treated us to a world-first, one-off rendition of Lou Reed's 'Walk On The Wild Side' with him on double bass, Bentley joining in on guitar and vocals and Swift on Herbie's battle-scarred 1960 Lake Placid Blue Fender Jazz. We interviewed Herbie for *BGM* – watch this space.

As customary, the mega-raffle closed the event, with every Basschatter who bought a ticket walking away with at least one prize; lucky Nancy Johnson made everybody jealous by taking home the Big One prototype, with Alex Claber's blessing. An absolute cracker of a day – join us for the next one!

ABM ON TOUR THIS SUMMER.
"For years I was frustrated because my band is really loud, in order to compete at that volume... all other amps would just fall apart. The Ashdown didn't. I can turn it up to compete with those guys and still have the tone stay together."
Nate Mendel
FOO FIGHTERS
"Ashdown allows me to create a sound that I just can't achieve with other amps."
Shavo Odadjian
SYSTEM OF A DOWN
Ashdown Engineering
"The look, the tone, it was everything I wanted from a bass rig & more. Its great to feel part of a family company something you don't see a lot of these days. I will never use another amp."
Ross MacDonald
THE 1975
"I was always searching for that big warm natural sound that wasn't very complicated. The first time I saw Pino Palladino playing one I was like, whatever that guys playing... thats what I'm having."
Brian Ray
SIR PAUL MCCARTNEY
"It took me forever to dial in where I could find a bass head I could really love. The minute I plunged into the Ashdown, set everything to about 12 noon, I was like... thats how I hear bass."
Nick Harmer
DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE
ABM
EVO IV
#spotthevu
WWW.ASHDOWNMUSIC.COM

Pic by Kevin Wilson

> "I THINK IT'S BEEN SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE WE'RE AT A POINT IN MUSIC WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO SEE SOMETHING DIFFERENT"

ALLIED FORCES

Bass industry veteran Mark Menghi of supergroup Metal Allegiance recalls a career in low-frequency mastery

I worked for Hartke for quite a long time, and basically signed everybody to them. Hartke had an A Team of an artist roster! Geezer Butler of Black Sabbath, Rex Brown from Pantera, Frank Bello of Anthrax, David Ellefson of Megadeth, Victor Wooten, Billy Sheehan, Stu Hamm… the list goes on and on. Hartke and I parted ways amicably in 2014 and I took that summer off to spend time with my children. Then David Ellefson called me and said, "Megadeth isn't playing Motörhead's Motorboat cruise, so let's do something!"

I was kicking around the Metal Allegiance idea and knew I wanted to do it, I just didn't know when. But this sparked it into fifth gear and within a month we were playing. On the cruise we came up with the idea of writing a record, where we would unite as a band, and in those four days my life changed completely. [Legendary drummer] Mike Portnoy and Alex Skolnick from Testament joined us and we were ready to go.

Dave and Mike wanted me to be a part of the creative process and I was like, "Really?" because I don't consider myself to be on their level. But they knew I had riffs and lyrics, and asked me to write with them. Alex and I hit it off and we formed a pretty cohesive writing team, so we locked ourselves into Portnoy's house for four days to write, and it's been a crazy ride since then. I remember we wrote five songs in three days in late 2014 and then we went back in January 2015 and wrote five more songs in another three days. It was recorded before our label Nuclear Blast even heard of it. I think it's been successful because we're at a point in music where people want to see something different, so people see a band with David Ellefson, Mike Portnoy and Alex Skolnick and they know it will be cool.

I use Ampeg amps because I wanted that Geezer Butler tone. I worked with him and picked his brain and studied that bottom end growl that he gets, because it was important to me that I got that. When we were in the studio, they had this old Ampeg 15 cab there and a very old SVT amp, and we recorded the entire record with that. I fell in love with that tone and reached out to Dino at Ampeg and said, "Dude, this tone is phenomenal, how do I recreate this?" and he hooked me up and got me dialled in.

I've been using the same bass for 25 years, an old Precision Special with DiMarzio P and J pickups. It's a workhorse. So it's very simple: an Ampeg rig, a Fender bass and a Morley wah pedal on a few things. My ode to Cliff Burton! I have two: an older one and the Cliff Burton one, which Ellefson gave me as a present. I use D'Addario XL 170s nickelwound strings – again, the classic set-up. That's the only string I've ever used. They were on my Fender when I bought it and I've never changed brands.

How did I get started on bass? Steve Harris of Iron Maiden got me started! I got the *Killers* album and listened to it and thought, "What is this noise?" Then I watched the *Live After Death* VHS tape and saw Maiden's stage show, and because of Steve's presence and his attack on bass, right there I knew that was the instrument for me. That led directly to the career that I've had. After Maiden I got into Metallica: Cliff Burton was a huge inspiration for me. The three guys for me were Steve, Geezer and Cliff.

I loved the jazz bassists too. I had the pleasure of working with [Weather Report drummer] Peter Erskine for a long time and I was always picking his brain about Jaco Pastorius. I got to play Jaco's Bass Of Doom when I was with Robert Trujillo, which was surreal. I wanted to play it, but I actually just held it. James Jamerson and Bob Bobbitt were also major influences on me.

We'll keep the Metal Allegiance train rolling: we released an EP back in August and then we'll record the second record. It's me, Alex and Mike because Ellefson is back out with Megadeth, and we have Troy Sanders from Mastodon, Alyssa from Arch Enemy and Mark from Death Angel on vocals. You never stop learning. I still call Billy Sheehan up and say, "Can you help me with this?"

Metal Allegiance's EP *Fallen Heroes* is out now on Nuclear Blast. Info: www.metalallegiance.com.

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BACK TO EARTH

Gail Ann Dorsey is an icon in bass world, having played with David Bowie, Lenny Kravitz and other luminaries. Teri Saccone asks the big questions

Pictures: Mathieu Bitton

"Being a good bass player is like being a good lover. You have to be as in tune with the music as you would be with your partner – or partners, if so inclined! You have to know exactly when to lead and when to support."

Besides being eminently quotable, Gail Ann Dorsey is a riveting bass player, an accomplished singer and solo artist: her bass playing is informed by locking in with the vocals, no matter what project she plays in. Best known as a member of David Bowie's band, which she joined for the late icon's tour with Nine Inch Nails back in 1995, she has carved a niche for herself by serving the music with which she's involved, whether as Bowie's longstanding colleague and co-singer, touring with Tears for Fears, Concrete Blonde and her current gig with Lenny Kravitz.

When *BGM* catches up with Dorsey, Bowie's passing earlier this year is the first thing she mentions. Without any prompting, she states: "It's still fresh to me. I have a lot of reminders

of him in my life and it still shocks me when I hear his songs in a supermarket and think 'He's gone.' I still find it hitting me in the face hard. There's no-one else in my life I can compare to the connection and the time I spent with him. I've had family and friends pass away, but with David it's been a public thing: it's hard to have a private mourning when he's so famous, and it's harder to process it. I get strangers still coming up to me saying how bad they feel."

> **"BOWIE GAVE ME EXPOSURE AND RECOGNITION THAT I'D NEVER DREAMED OF, AND I'M SO GRATEFUL FOR THAT — BUT THIS LOSS BRINGS UP ONE'S OWN MORTALITY ON A DEEPLY PERSONAL LEVEL"**

Bowie's various bands featured the finest musicians anywhere on the globe: he retained Dorsey for almost 20 years. "He considered me his bass player, even though I was only on three or four albums," she says. "It was the longest stretch I worked with anyone. Ultimately he changed my life for the better. He gave me exposure and recognition that I'd never dreamed of, and I'm so grateful for that – but this loss brings up one's own mortality on a deeply personal level.'

Bowie encouraged Dorsey's own solo endeavours, she recalls. "He was such a supporter of my material. If you were working with him, it was because he really loved what you brought to his music and what you did on your own. He saw things in me that I didn't see in myself. He knew how to get the best out of his players and saw what we were good at. He was such a great mentor, and for me, one way to remember him is to play my own music again. I feel his death has sparked a fire under my ass to do my own music again – as we don't know how much time we have left here. That really hits home."

As a 'feel player' who switched from guitar to bass as a young musician, it's no surprise that technicality for its own sake holds no interest for Dorsey. "I have nowhere near the technical chops of some of the big name players. Technicality itself is not musical," she declares. "What interests me is playing bass off the vocals. It's all about creating these beautiful weaving lines along with the vocal melody, so if a bass player latches onto that vocal line, that's the key to grabbing people's attention with respect to popular music. People hear that vocal melody first and then subconsciously they hear the guitar riff, the bass-line, the little hooks."

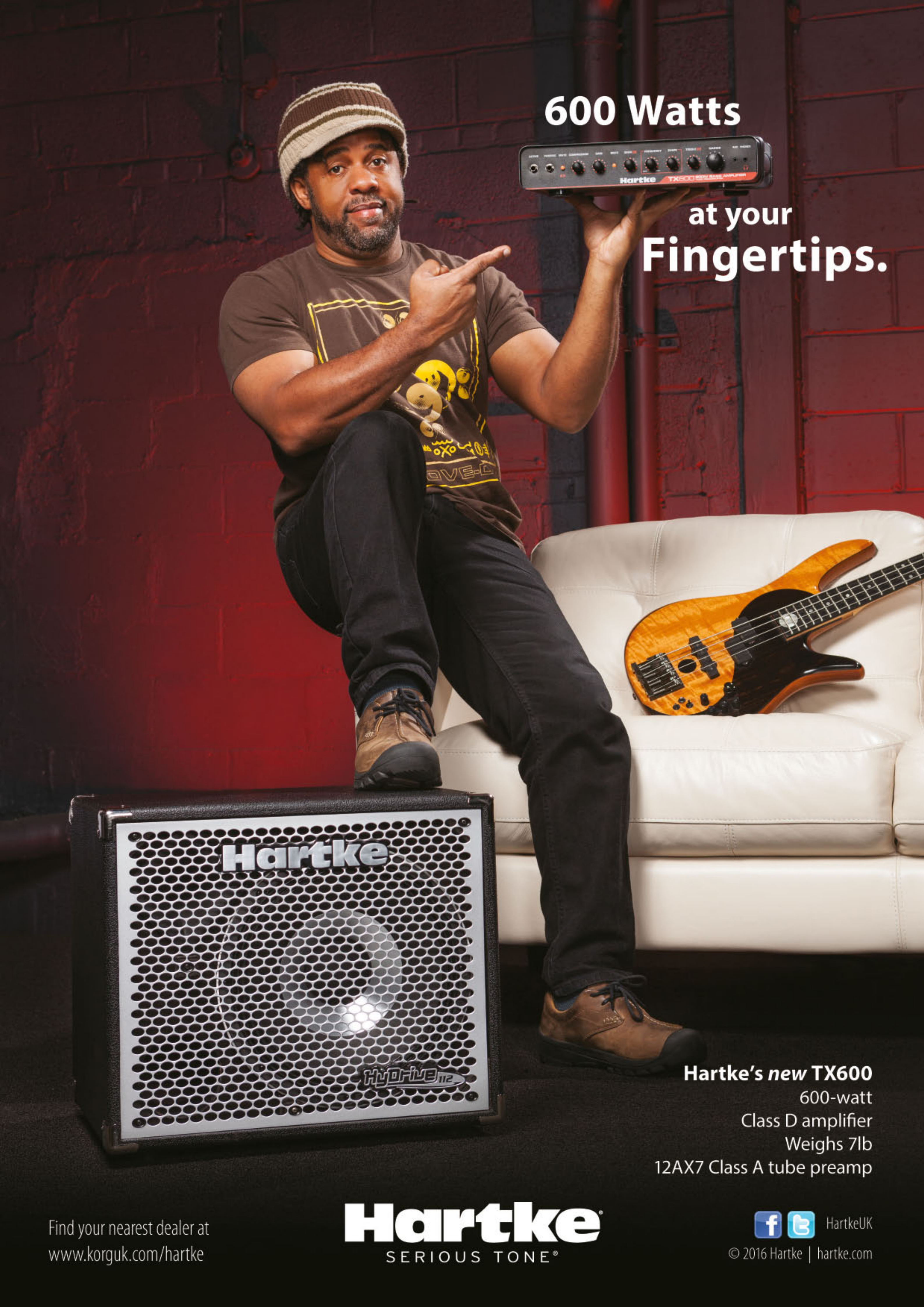
Dorsey remains active, currently touring with Lenny Kravitz. How does Kravitz compare with Bowie work-wise? "Lenny is so different from David, as their work ethics are opposite," she explains. "Lenny works crazy hours where David worked around family times. Lenny will sometimes start rehearsals at 11pm, but David would keep things more nine to five, and we had weekends off. But I'll jump in the car and get into the city when Lenny calls."

She adds: "Lenny doesn't give you as much freedom because he plays most of the instruments on his albums, and he wants to hear it as he played it. I try my best to play it like he did and so far, so good. He's more of a taskmaster, and this is a mirroring job. Now, after five years, I'm starting to slip my own ideas a bit in there. Lenny's great because he's got a huge heart, and is totally fun." Dorsey considers relating to other people as her best asset for staying employed. As she says, "You have to know when to keep your lips zipped and when to speak out. I've found that interpersonal skills go a long way both in the studio and out on the road, as people who want you around will give you more work."

When we speak with Dorsey, she is in the process of purchasing land in upstate New York on which to build a home. It turns out that the village she lives in, a few miles from the historic revolutionary war town of Kingston, New York, is also home to other top session musicians. "I've lived here since returning from London," she explains. "I'm neighbours with Tony Levin, [Bowie drummer] Zachary Alford and my best friend, Sara Lee [ex-Gang Of Four bassist], who first got me here. This area is perfect, because I can get into New York City pretty quickly, and there's such a musical community here in the beautiful Catskill mountains – but we're a 90 minute drive into my favourite city in the world."

With the music business paradigm having shifted drastically from sales to live performance as the big earner, Kravitz has moved with the times and plays live whenever possible. "We do a lot of private and corporate gigs, like many artists are doing these days: musicians aren't making money from records," explains Dorsey. "For me, being onstage is like meditating – only better, because I feel I'm not thinking at all up there, only responding while being in the zone. It's like a high, and I enjoy that so much."

Info: www.gailanndorsey.com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TONE TALK

Amplifier maker extraordinaire Jule Potter talks bass gear with Mike Brooks

If you're a musical equipment designer, having high-profile players endorse your products must be an exhilarating feeling, justifying the intensive design, production, assembly and testing that goes into your work. The fact that such players stand by the product and recommend it to their peers is a sign that you have hit the nail firmly on the head.

The Monique preamp by the Santa Cruz, California-based amplifier manufacturer Jule Potter is one such product, judging by the number of sightings of the unit on TV, live and in studios. We thought it was high time we caught up with this builder and purveyor of bass tone to find out what makes him tick.

"I have so many friends here in the UK," begins the great man. "The bass community is a fantastic family, and the bass market is a receptive marketplace and audience. Bass players are unique: they have much better hearing – and I don't mean that in a facetious way at all. They can hear the highs and the lows and they don't play into distortion or latency. I'm a very small company: almost all of the hand-building is still done by me, so there is still a fair amount of intrigue regarding my products, but people have seen the likes of Dave Swift and Paul Turner using the preamps and that's OK as we build familiarity."

Potter comes from an electronics background, and following an early career in the US Navy, he found himself working with Mark Samson of Matchless Amps. "Mark is a personal friend and a mentor," he says. "I did all of his wiring for three or four years and learnt an immense amount, for which I'm very grateful – but then I decided that I wanted to build this stuff full-time."

He continues: "I've always had musician friends. I watched my bass-playing friends in LA bringing all this gear in at 2am in the morning, having done a $25 gig, and I decided that I needed to get them something that sounded like a full-on amp and was portable. The Monique preamp started around seven years ago, but we didn't get 'real' about it until 2010 or 2011: the first year or two was very much experimentation. The Dove Cage was the beginning, and everything else was a customer request. The first rackmount wasn't my idea: a customer said, 'Can you make me one for a rack?', and of course we could."

Being receptive to customers' needs is important, as he explains. "If you're halfway smart in this business, you watch people such as Dave and Paul, listen to what they say and they will tell you, hopefully directly, if something isn't right. Darryl Anders had some good ideas, so I went and searched out how to do what he was suggesting and made it happen. Some of the amp features, like the DI output capability, were directly customer related. I remember a guy in France saying 'I need to drive a thousand feet of cable with the DI', and I didn't know how to do that but we did come up with some ways to make it happen. With the preamp, the only thing we had to incorporate later was being able to give more level out to amps that don't do that internally. They need a real push, so we created a push/pull on the Line Out to add an extra 10 dB. Most players don't use it or even know it's there, but the capability is now built in, per customer request."

As it's a small operation, Potter has to produce a high quality product every time with little room for failure – so he runs a tight ship. "If we start on a Monique today, in three days it's done," he says. "With a Bamboo model, we start on the electronics and that takes three days, then 10 days for the finishing. We've been running a six to 12 week backlog, but customers are okay with that and I'm grateful. I have people I really care for on stage creating their art, so I'd better do my side right. The scariest thing in my mind is one of my performers not being to able to get through their performance: when a player such as Dave plays a note, the one thing that enters my mind is, 'Please keep it going!'"

Valve technology, despite its benefits in terms of harmonic colouration and richness of tone, can be a random business as no two valves in a batch are the same – so it's no surprise that Potter is continuously trying new valves and combinations. "A lot of people don't like Chinese stuff," he observes, "but the biggest valves in the Monique are Chinese and they sound more musical to me. I order 60 to 100 valves at a time, I sift through them and throw away around 15 per cent, but that's the nature of tubes. Some of them may last a decade, but we usually burn everything in for 24 hours and get very few component failures. You can choose cheap components very easily, or you can use something that will stand your customer well: the price range isn't terrifically different."

Speaking to Potter, it's clear how seriously he takes his work – but what drives him on is actually something quite simple. "The thing I look for most is the smile on the face of each player," he says. "You can actually see that in the first couple of notes, and I not only have great respect for the players but I really care for these people. It's a hard job but if I can bring some enjoyment to them while they complete their work, so that those who are receiving that work are happy, then I think I've done a great thing. One thing we hear regularly from customers is that with the Monique, they have finally been able to achieve the sound they have in their head – which is a wonderful thing to hear, and a great feeling."

Info: www.juleamps.com

Pic by Eckie

STILL STANDING

Swedish metallers Sabaton return with a new album, *The Last Stand*. Bassist Pär Sundström says hello

The bass on the new album is a Fender which we've used before: a Precision which we bought new in 2010. It's just for the studio: live I will play an ESP LTD which I customise with a heavy gauge .135 E string. I have two basses live, but I haven't used the backup bass for years, even though I run around onstage. They last pretty good, I'm super happy with them. I only change them when I want a new finish.

In the studio, I've been using a Sansamp in Pro Tools. I leave everything up to our producer, though: he says to me, "This is the way it's going to sound on the album" and I'm fine with that. If I had specific sounds, I would mess up his job: I trust him and his production.

How did I get into bass? When I was 14, a guy came up to me at school and said "You've got long hair, do you want to be in a band?" and I said "Yes, but I can't play anything" so he said he'd teach me to play the bass guitar because they didn't have a bassist. I thought this sounded like fun, so we started to play. Actually we didn't play that much because we were mostly drinking and headbanging... and that's how it all started. The guitarists in that band couldn't agree whether to play fast or slow metal, and ended up going out of the rehearsal room to throw apples at each other. I realise that sounds ridiculous.

I messed up my education because I drank too much, so I had no choice but to keep playing music. I was actually inspired by the frontpeople in bands, because a good heavy metal show has a lot of attitude and a lot of energy. My heroes were singers, not bass players, but I couldn't sing and anyway, I thought the bass was the coolest instrument in the band, so I kept going with it, although I didn't really improve as a bass player until Sabaton formed. We do more than 150 shows a year and we record constantly and always do interviews, which means that we have made a lot of progress.

Our singer writes and demos most of our songs, and he records the bass on those demos, so that's usually how I play the bass parts on the albums. I don't invent a lot of things, although I do have some ideas. On the 10 songs on the new album, it's definitely a trip into areas where the band hasn't been before: we've tried a few new things, although the bass hasn't changed much. On one of the songs, I don't touch the bass for the first minute – which means I have to figure out what to do in that minute! I use that time to communicate with the crowd.

***The Last Stand* is out now on Nuclear Blast.**
Info: www.sabaton.net.

GEAR
REVIEWS

Behold our world-beating bass gear review section, where we bring you the crop of each month's new, interesting or otherwise relevant bass guitars, bass amplifiers, bass speakers and bass effects. Occasionally we'll review a guitar effect if it's particularly useful for bassists, and we'll test recording equipment and general accessories every now and then as well, but generally speaking, this zone is for bass-specific gear.

We take the ratings that we give each item very seriously. *BGM* is the only print magazine devoted to bass in this country, and we have readers from all over the world, so we're responsible about our conclusions. If a product is worth your investigation, we'll say so; if it's flawed in some way, we won't hold back from making that clear. We're not beholden to advertisers in any way and our conclusions are entirely independent of the views of manufacturers, musicians and distributors.

When you read about a bass-related product here, you know you're getting a sensible, balanced review from an experienced bass tester. Value for money is at the top of our agenda in these cash-strapped times, but on the other hand, we believe in paying for quality.

Right, that's enough from me. Remember, this is just about the only place that it's good to have GAS!*

Joel McIver, editor

*GAS = Gear Acquisition Syndrome (a malaise often suffered by bass players)

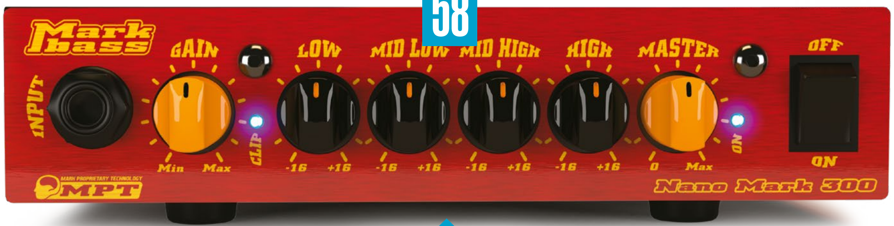
48

CORT A4 Ultra and A5 Plus

54

DINGWALL Combustion 5

58



MARKBASS Nano 300 Head

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GALLIEN-KRUEGER MB108 Combo

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Proel International
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We review a lot of basses in this magazine from the low- and high-budget end of the spectrum. It's obviously fun to play an instrument that costs as much as your annual mortgage. It's also fun to try and get decent sounds out of a chunk of sub-£150 plywood: you never know what marvellous tones lurk beneath the bonnet of the cheapest-looking bass. But it's less easy to review mid-market guitars: as the immortal lines from *Spinal Tap* went, they're the lukewarm water between fire and ice. Let's investigate...

Build Quality

Pick up the cheaper instrument first, the A5 Plus: have no fear, there's nothing lightweight about it. In fact, it has a feeling of solidity that more than a few pricier basses lack, from the firm-feeling Hipshot tuners down to the huge through-body Trans Tone bridge, a true monster. A quick

examination of fret ends and the pickups reveals no evident flaws, and the finish is pristine from the hips, via the neck-through zone through to the neck.

Bear with the A4 Ultra: the extra £360 you'll need to pay for one less string, superior tonewoods and upgraded pickups won't seem essential until you plug in. The body, with its central stripes, is reminiscent of the recent Aria Pro II reissue we reviewed a couple of issues back and differs from the A5's cheaper timbers by pairing a maple top with mahogany. It too is a bass with considerable presence: its sustain can be clearly felt, even unplugged. A nice touch is the rubber coating on the controls: why more luthiers don't do this, and save sweaty-fingered bass players much grief, is beyond us.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Cort A4 Ultra

Price | £1239 (inc VAT) **Made In** | Indonesia
Body | Ash with rosewood top
Neck | Maple and wenge
Neck join | Neck-through
Fretboard | Rosewood, 24 frets, 34" scale
Pickups | 2 x Bartolini Custom MK4 CBC, MK-1 preamp
Controls | Master volume, pickup blend, three-band EQ, active/passive selector
Bridge | Hipshot Trans Tone
Tuners | Hipshot Ultralight
Case/Gigbag included? | Hard case

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Formidable tone range and playability
Minus | None
Overall | An excellent instrument at an accordingly high price

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY	■■■■■■■■■■
SOUND QUALITY	■■■■■■■■■□
VALUE	■■■■■■■□□□

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Cort A5 Plus

Price | £779 (inc VAT)
Made In | Indonesia
Body | Mahogany with figured maple top
Neck | Maple and wenge
Neck join | Neck-through
Fretboard | Rosewood, 24 frets, 34" scale
Pickups | 2 x Bartolini MK-1 and preamp
Controls | Master volume, pickup blend, three-band EQ, active/passive selector
Bridge | Hipshot Trans Tone
Tuners | Hipshot Ultralight
Case/Gigbag included? | Hard case

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Mighty bridge and control system
Minus | A little generic
Overall | A whole lot of bass for this price tag: recommended

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY	■■■■■■■■■□
SOUND QUALITY	■■■■■■■■□□
VALUE	■■■■■■■■■■

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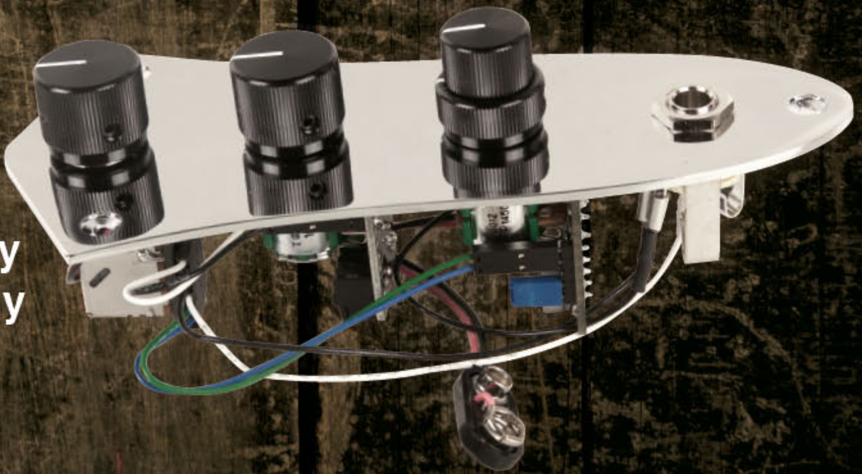

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Sounds And Playability

The A4 is a delight to play. Before you even explore the EQ options, its default tone is a gritty, meaty sound that makes you want to dig in hard. The neck is extremely player-friendly, with a finish that sits nicely between slippery and sticky, more or less at the point that you don't need to spend time thinking about it. Your fingers will feel more dexterous than usual – always an encouraging sign...

Slip into active mode and push the bottom end: you'll be rewarded with a solid, if not earth-shaking response. This bass is happiest up at the high mids and top end, supplying slap lines with a scintillating tone that retains a bit of crunch. Slide off the glass-shattering frequencies a touch and your octave disco lines will shine, while tappers will be in a world of comfort thanks to the hot pickups. In passive mode, meanwhile, you'll encounter a range of perfectly useable – if not actually mind-blowing – tones: that active set-up is there to be used.

Switch to the A5 Plus and the similarities between the two instruments, different string configuration, body woods and pickups notwithstanding, aren't immediately drastic. The B string isn't the hugest we've heard around these parts, although it's acceptable: pump up the bass boost in active mode if you want to give it a helping hand. In fact the passive tones are a little boring, if we're honest, so give them a leg up and dial up that active EQ with alacrity. You'll find yourself with a range of options that few sub-£800 basses, especially mass-produced East Asian instruments, offer.

Conclusion

Well, that's yet more proof – as if anyone needed it – that bass performance can be had without the need for bankruptcy. Sure, we'd expect a hell of a bass for £1200 and change, which is exactly what the A4 Ultra is – but to get an instrument of the A5's calibre for a mere £700-ish is always gratifying. Give these respectable basses a play with our whole-hearted recommendation: if this were the general standard for the mid-price market, we'd want to hear a lot more basses like these.

"My jaw dropped the first time I plugged in my Radial JDX, and that's the truth! Now I use it at every live show."
~ Doug Johns
Victor Wooten, Buddy Miles, Chuck Rainey.

"The JDX captures my sound with previously unobtainable control and clarity, offering our soundman a direct injection of sonic rage!"
~ Kerry King
Slayer.

"With the JDX, I get consistent, coherent tone night after night and the guitarists love the sound in their in-ears. It simply rocks!"
~ Eddie Mapp
FOH - Evanescence, Papa Roach, Stone Temple Pilots.

"I own all the top speaker emulators and the JDX is the most natural sounding. Live, I send the feed to the house instead of mic'ing my cabs and I'm really happy with the results."
~ Michael Thompson
Shania Twain, Celine Dion, Baby Face.

"The Radial JDX captures the distortion from the bass amp without any loss of low end. And with such a loud band, it also helps eliminate spill."
~ Jon Burton
FOH - The Prodigy.

"The JDX is nothing short of revolutionary! I can't believe the clarity and dynamics, yet it still retains the grind of my bass amp. It breathes!"
~ Danny Miranda
Queen, Blue Oyster Cult, Meat Loaf.

"Little did I know about the detail Radial adds to my overall sound until I tried the JDX. It's the little thing that makes a big difference."
~ Silenoz
Dimmu Borgir.

"The JDX gives character without the worries of bleed and feedback. I was so surprised how close it sounded to a SM57, I had to double-check."
~ Jim Warren
FOH - Radiohead, Arcade Fire, Nine Inch Nails.

"With the Radial JDX, my guitar sound is much fuller and cleaner in my in-ear monitors and out front, our engineer loves to blend it with the amp mic for a consistently 'thick' sound."
~ Ben Ottewell
Gomez.

"I was looking to make the bass 'poke' through in my mix so I tried the JDX. It's a great alternative to mic'ing a dirty cab. I've been using it ever since."
~ Russ Giroux
FOH - Chickenfoot.

"The JDX is the simplest way to get a true, no-bleed signal from my amp. I mix the JDX with a mic'd cab to get the best possible balance. Love it."
~ Dave Weiner
Steve Vai Band.

Meet the New Box!

The Radial JDX Reactor™ amp DI box has been ugraded with 48-Volt phantom powering and some great new features!

Sound engineers have long been fighting to get guitar amps to sound good through the FOH and monitor systems. Room acoustics, phase, resonance from the stage floor and bleed from other instruments all play havoc — and that' is just the start... you still have to make the amp sound good with a mic placed right in front of the speaker. To make matters worse, those pesky guitar players are all using in-ear monitors so they are hearing the sound straight off the mic... and they're not very happy with it.

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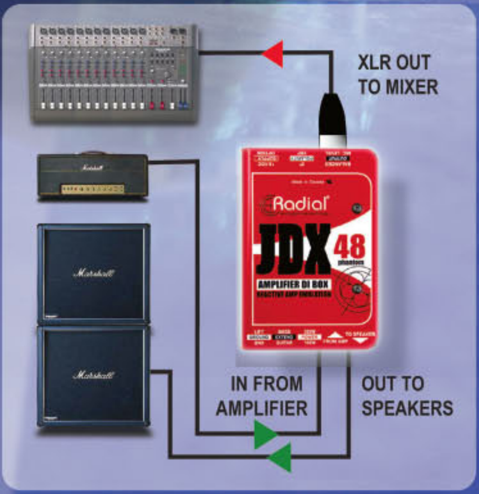

Meet the new JDX 48... same as the old box, but now even better!

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DINGWALL
Combustion 5

With fanned fret instruments growing in popularity, just how good can a £1200 Dingwall be? Mike Brooks gives a Combustion 5 a thorough examination.

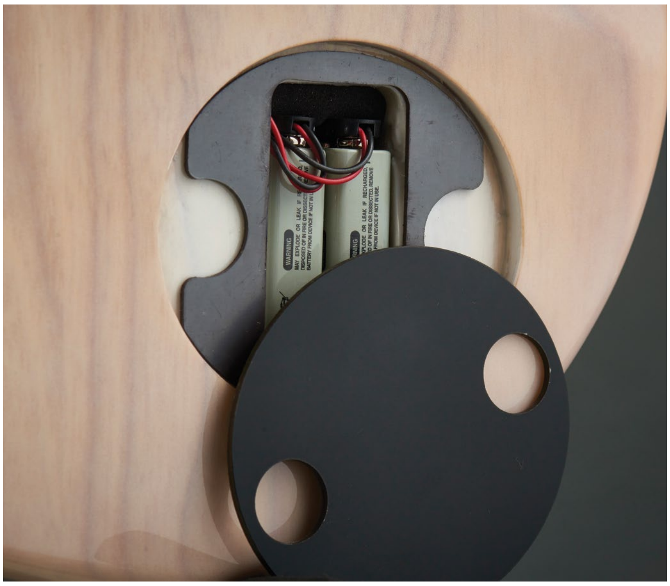
Bass Direct
www.bassdirect.co.uk

Dingwall Guitars
www.dingwallguitars.com

Dingwall instruments are certainly on the up, gradually growing in visibility and being adopted as the instrument of choice by bassists of all genres. The Combustion range is the 'entry level' so to speak, made in China but assembled back at Dingwall HQ in Canada. So are we looking at this as an example of extreme cost cutting to get the name out there or is this a high quality instrument worthy of the Dingwall moniker?

Build Quality

Dingwall basses have an enviable reputation for quality craftsmanship, so rest assured that this instrument shows no signs of lacking in the manufacturing, construction or assembly departments. At 4.4 kg, this particular bass isn't super-light but it isn't overbearingly heavy either, it feels solid and well-balanced, inviting the player to dig in and play it.



"IT'S BUILT TO LAST, BALLSY AND LIVELY WITH PLENTY OF BOUNCE, VIBRANCY AND GREAT SUSTAIN — ALL YOU WOULD WANT FROM A FIVE-STRING BASS REALLY"

The Translucent White finish over the swamp ash body timber (the grain being visible through the gloss lacquer) works very well in conjunction with the light coloured three-piece maple neck and fingerboard, while the body shape and three-ply scratchplate really enhance the visuals. Contouring front and back makes the bass very comfortable to wear and although the low B string has a 37" speaking length, the length of the neck isn't inhibitive or detrimental to the Combustion's playability.

The fanned frets, 19mm string spacing and slim neck profile combine to provide an effortless neck to play, and considering this is a five-string instrument, it's reassuring to see that the Dingwall reputation for highly playable five-string necks is firmly intact, even with a nut width of 52mm. The four-bolt neck attachment is solid and tight and along with the set-up and fret detail, it is clear that a great deal of attention to detail has been afforded to this bass before it left Dingwall HQ – the overall level of finishing is top notch.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Price | £1200
Made in | China
Body | Swamp ash in Translucent White finish
Neck | Maple, three-piece laminate (with graphite reinforcement), 34/37" scale
Neck joint | Bolt-on, four bolt
Nut width | 52mm
Fingerboard | Maple
Frets | 24
Pickups | Dingwall FD-3n Neodymium pickups x 2
Electronics | EMG BT07 3-band EQ 18 volt preamp
Controls | Volume, pickup selector (4 settings), bass/middle/treble, active/passive switch
Hardware | Chrome hardware, mono-rail bridge units, Hipshot-licensed open gear machine heads
Weight | 4.4 kgs
Case/gig bag included? | No
Left-hand option available? | No

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Supremely playable and comfortable, a fabulous low B string and extensive tonal palette.
Minus | Restricted to a limited number of string manufacturers.
Overall | A high quality instrument at a very impressive price, Dingwall have really come up with the goods. Consider our socks well and truly blown off!

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY
SOUND QUALITY
VALUE

Chrome hardware has been used throughout, the Hipshot-licensed machine heads are securely attached and turn reassuringly smoothly, the strings being guided by an 'all in one' string tree before crossing the bone nut. The Neodymium pickups are well spaced and positioned to offer a good variety of tones and are of the rectangular variety unlike the rounded pickups used on a lot of the Canadian-manufactured models. The V-shaped control layout is intuitive and effective with controls for volume, pickup selection (neck pickup, both in series, both in parallel, bridge pickup) and an active/passive switch. The magnetic backplate covering the battery cavity makes battery changes effortless as always and a quick peek inside the well-shielded control cavity showed a very tidy cabling arrangement.

Sounds And Playability

The layout of the fanned frets feels as natural as ever (to this player at least) and coupled with the overall dimensions of the neck and body, this particular Combustion is a real joy to play. Acoustically, the bass sustains impressively and resonates like a bell; string volume and clarity are of equal weight across all five strings. If projecting your sound is paramount, have no fears of lost notes with this bass! Even before plugging in, the tone is warm but defined with a great solidity of tone with no evident 'sponginess' even on the B string.

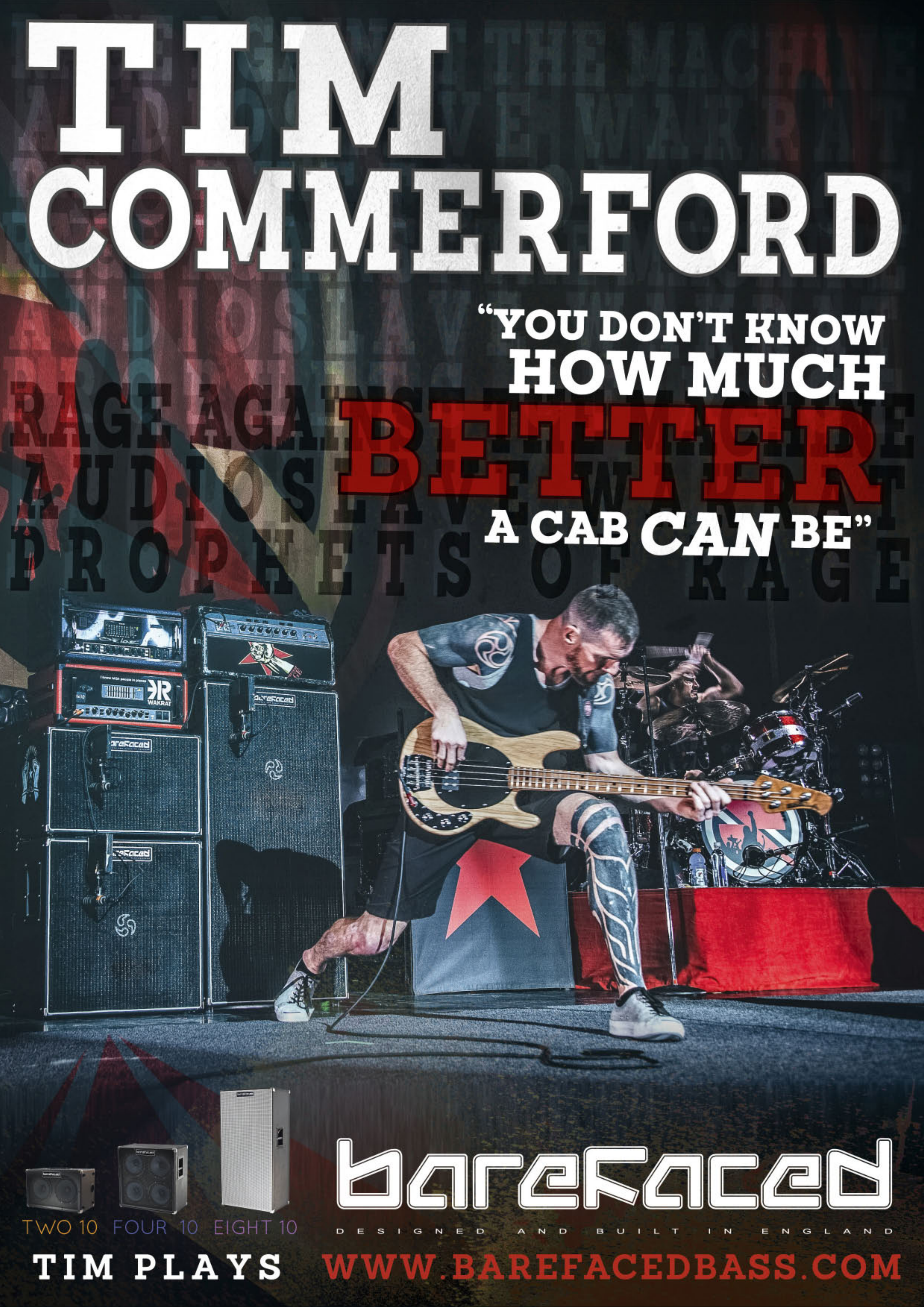
Plugged in, the B string is loud and proud, throaty with plenty of definition, a good start. Running across all four pickup options, the performance of the B string is equally impressive, not that I'm surprised having played several Dingwall instruments in the past, but it's reassuring that the quality remains. The pickup switching firmly illustrates the tonal colours on offer; the neck pickup is what you would expect, fat and rounded but still tight (the scale length helps in this respect) with plenty of natural bottom end but running to both pickups in series gives the whole bass a turbo boost. The mids are accentuated while the overall tone has more power and grunt with a sparkly top end. With both pickups in parallel, the underlying tone has slightly less attack and aggressiveness but is replaced with a smoother character that would certainly appeal to fingerstyle players simply laying down a smooth groove. Moving to the bridge pickup,

you're presented with a naturally twangy tone with plenty of honk if you require it – but don't be fooled, there is still plenty of power in the signal.

Bringing the EQ into play, the EMG circuit does a great job at accentuating the natural character of the bass without ever sounding extreme, the mid EQ providing some extra punch when it was needed while the bass and treble EQ provide the bass with a great slap tone as well as some extra power and definition when played fingerstyle or with a pick.

Conclusions

I'm happy to report that this bass is well deserving of the Dingwall reputation. It's built to last, ballsy and lively with plenty of bounce, vibrancy and great sustain, all you would want from a five-string bass really. I can't recommend it highly enough – this is why so many bassists are adopting these instruments into their bass arsenals. Buy with confidence!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MARKBASS
Nano 300 Head

Kev Sanders puts on his readers and squints at the new super-compact Markbass Nano 300 bass head

MSL Professional
www.mslpro.co.uk

It's easy to see why Markbass, now in business for almost 16 years, has been so successful. They have consistently produced distinctive, top-notch amps, speakers and accessories of a quality that makes them attractive to some of the best musicians in the world, while selling them at a price that can be justified by most bassists at whatever level they play.

Markbass have often preferred a 'slow-cook' development policy for their amp heads and products such as the superb Little Mark amp have been around since the company's foundation, frequently updated and developed over the years. One such product that was available until quite recently was the F1 amp. This was a single unit, ultra-compact bass head with a 500W digital amp and back-to-basics preamp (a later F500 added more EQ and routing functions). These amps slipped under the radar for many bass players, and in some respects were ahead of their time. But for those in the know, they were highly prized and still change hands for top dollar. The new Nano 300 has lots in common with the F1 and F500, not least the richly detailed midrange and astonishing power – it's hard to imagine how such a tiny amp can produce so much volume.

Like the F1 amp, a feature of the new Nano amp is its simple control layout. There's a Gain and Master volume and a four-band EQ section (Low, Mid Low, Mid Hi, Hi). This is pretty much the same as that on most Markbass heads, with plus or minus 16 dB of gain available for each well-chosen frequency. Unlike the F1, and indeed most Markbass amps, however, the Nano's front panel doesn't include the two standard Markbass filters (VPF and VLE). For those used to working with the

“THE NEW NANO 300 HAS LOTS IN COMMON WITH THE F1 AND F500, NOT LEAST THE RICHLY DETAILED MIDRANGE AND ASTONISHING POWER — IT’S HARD TO IMAGINE HOW SUCH A TINY AMP CAN PRODUCE SO MUCH VOLUME”

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Price | £349
Made in | Italy/Indonesia
Power | 300 watts @ 8 Ohms
Features | MPT power amp, Gain/Master volume, input, EQ (Low, Mid Low, Mid Hi, Hi) with +/-16 dB gain, FX send/return, tuner output, XLR balanced DI output with pre/post and ground lift switches; dual purpose Neutrik / ¼” jack lockable speaker connector
Weight | 1.45kg

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Simple, small and relatively inexpensive with no compromise in terms of sound quality
Minus | No headphone or aux in jacks
Overall | Classic signature Markbass tone in a super-compact and simple to use package. Plug in and play!

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY
SOUND QUALITY
VALUE

"MARKBASS ARE ON TO ANOTHER WINNER HERE. THERE ARE PLENTY OF PLAYERS WHO WANT A LIGHT, NEAT AND STRAIGHTFORWARD AMP THAT'S SIMPLE TO USE AND HAS ENOUGH POWER FOR SMALL GIGS AND REHEARSALS"

standard Markbass front panel, this will be disappointing. These two controls allow you to quickly add your own distinctive character to the sound and many players, myself included, set the EQ flat and just use the VPF and VLE controls to shape their sound as they wish. You can get something like the same sounds by carefully adjusting the EQ, but it's a longer process.

It's good to see that the back of the Nano features a pro-spec Speakon out plus a standard mains input rather than a separate PSU. You also get an effects send and return and a tuner out. Also welcome is a balanced XLR DI output with a Pre/Post EQ switch and a ground lift button. It's a shame there's no headphone socket, and a mini-jack Aux In would also be a very useful addition to an amp that would be perfect for practice and rehearsal.

Hooking the Nano up to various cabs gives a good indication of just how capable this tiny amp is. First, I tried wiring it up to a 4 Ohm Bergantino 2x12 cab. Unsurprisingly this gives you a great sounding, light-weight and compact rig that would handle nearly any gig, drawing as it does the full 300 watts from the amp. There's low end and power to spare. Use it with a high-quality cab like this and you'll soon question why anyone would spend four or five times the price of the Nano on anything else. Sure, some of the amps I've used with this cab are way more powerful and have more complex preamps, but at low and mid level volumes, do they really sound better? Honestly, no. That's something to think about.

Linked to a single Markbass 1x15 plus horn cab, I used the Nano on a couple of gigs playing both double and electric bass. Although still impressive, used like this in conjunction with a single 8 Ohm speaker, the amp does start to run out of puff at (very) high volumes. But this is really using the Nano beyond its remit: overall it still punched way above its weight in terms of power, volume and in particular, tone.

The micro-amp market is still a fairly new niche; I guess the Gallien Krueger MB 200 would be the Nano's nearest equivalent. Just like that amp, I can see the Nano 300 being a big hit not only with bass guitarists looking for a simple and powerful amp, but also double bassists and even acoustic guitarists. Its warm and beautifully detailed sound makes even the most ordinary instrument sound accurate and classy.

Markbass are on to another winner here. There are plenty of players who want a light, neat and straightforward amp that's simple to use and has enough power for small gigs and rehearsals. Although larger and a little less powerful, the Little Mark 250 Blackline might represent a better option for some of those guys, with its lower price and more comprehensive line out features – and those VPF and VLE filters. But the Nano will not disappoint, and its combination of accurate sound, size, weight, power and price makes it a very tempting proposition.

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GALLIEN-KRUEGER
MB108 Combo

There is always a market for small, fully functional, portable bass combos with plenty of punch. Is GK's new MB108 up to the task? asks Mike Brooks

Bass Gear
www.bassgear.co.uk

Twenty-five watts might not sound like a lot of output for your hard-earned folding stuff, but you might be surprised how well some of the smaller bass combos out there perform, particularly with recent advances in technology. Sure, there's no escaping basic physics but with cabinet manufacture, porting, venting and driver improvements reaching new levels of performance, this particular combo might just surprise us in terms of what it's capable of.

Build Quality

Constructed in the USA, the aluminium cabinet chassis ensures that the cabinet is relatively lightweight, coming in at 7.9kg and covered in a rugged black vinyl tolex covering with black metallic corners. The silver GK logo adorns the mesh grille covering to protect the speaker, and the rubber feet on the underside of the combo can be removed if you wish, perhaps to improve bass response so that the combo sits directly on the floor.

The control panel sits in a recessed section on the top of the unit, with the controls placed within the recess: saves them getting damaged or knocked off. The controls all turn reassuringly smoothly, and as with previous GK products, the combo as a whole appears to be built to last: none of the visible components or features look or feel cheap or inferior. Following the ¼" jack input, controls for Gain, Treble, Middle and Bass provide a simple but effective front end, with a 3.5mm

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Price | £149
Made in | USA
Power | 25 watts RMS
Impedance | 8 Ohms
Features | Gain, treble (+/- 14dB @ 8 kHz), middle (+6dB/-10dB @ 500 Hz), bass (+/- 10dB @ 50 Hz)
Speakers | 1 x 8" ceramic bass speaker
Dimensions | 395mm (H) x 318mm (W) x 293mm (D)
Connections | 1/4" jack input, 3.5mm auxiliary input, 3.5mm headphone output
Weight | 7.9 kg

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Small, lightweight and robust with a strong tonal display and simple control layout
Minus | No expansion options, and the output is limited
Overall | A cost-effective option for home practice, with a lot going for it

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY
SOUND QUALITY
VALUE

auxiliary input for connecting external audio sources and a 3.5mm headphone output. The power on/off button illuminates in red when you turn the combo on and turns blue after a few seconds to show that the unit is operational.

The EQ section offers boost and cut at 50 Hz (bass), 500 Hz (middle) and 8 kHz (treble) respectively, while the inbuilt input pad determines the strength of the input signal in order to optimise the available headroom, bearing in mind the limited output of this particular combo.

Obviously the front end isn't going to confuse anyone with its simple layout: this combo doesn't need to be complicated, but it does need to produce an effective display. The US-produced 8" speaker should be capable of producing some reasonable bass tones, while the additional single port should provide some extra frequency help in the lower ranges.

Sounds And Playability

Using a passive Fender Jazz and an active Music Man Stingray, this combo does a sterling job of conveying what both of these basses are about tonally. Even with such a small enclosure and speaker, the GK MB108 isn't taking any prisoners.

The signal is warm and rounded with either bass, supplying plenty of articulation, detail and punch, particularly from the Stingray. The warmth of the Jazz comes across and a minor tweak of the EQ gives a little extra top end clarity, as well as some added power and definition by boosting the mids slightly.

"LIMITATIONS ASIDE, THIS IS A MORE-THAN-CAPABLE COMBO"

The bass EQ supplies a powerful boost, and the unit seems more than happy to be pushed in that direction. The signal doesn't become woolly or ill-defined and with the characteristic powerful delivery of the Stingray, the combo holds up rather well in the face of a fingerstyle, pick and slap onslaught. Granted, the cabinet and speaker size have limitations, but the signals don't sound boxy or over-compressed. The single port gives the low end a noticeable boost, particularly when the unit is placed in the corner of the room.

Conclusion

So what do we have? Well, limitations aside, this is a more-than-capable combo and even with a rating of 25 watts at 8 Ohms, the MB108 certainly pumps out the busiest bass-lines in a very respectable manner. It's not until you really push the combo that it starts to show a few dodgy moments, which, in all honesty, may be down to the powerful circuitry of the Stingray. The tone-shaping facilities are limited, but what GK has provided is a sensible, simple but effective EQ that offers plenty of tonal differentiation.

In a small practice context or with acoustic instruments, this amp is a very practical solution: against a drum kit and raging rock guitars, you may struggle to keep up. I'm not convinced that the unit will be suitable for gigging with unless it is with acoustic instruments. The unit has no expansion options, unfortunately: you'll need to go for the next unit up, the MB110, for those. But as a standalone combo, this is a very effective unit for home practice.

GREATNESS
IS IN THE DETAILS

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ELECTRO-HARMONIX

Bass Clone

EHX return with a killer bass chorus. Let the clone wars begin, says Joel McIver

Electro-Harmonix
www.ehx.com

Stoner-rock bassists with shallow pockets rejoice! Here's a chorus pedal that allows you to sound like you're from Palm Desert back in 1991 for a measly 59 quid – and it's from Electro-Harmonix too, not some low-budget, Pedals 'R' Us-type FX manufacturer.

Based on EHX's established guitar chorus, the Small Clone, made popular by Kurt Cobain among other rockers, the Bass Clone offers you a simple but effective range of controls. The Depth pot controls the modulation of the effect – in other words how much soupy chorusy tone is slathered all over your dry signal – while Rate manages the speed of the chorus, or how quickly the sound rises and falls. You can have a lot of fun combining the two: for example, max out Depth and roll off Rate and you get a spooky, rich sound that isn't so much chorus-like as a doubling or tripling of your bass tone. Once you hear that tone, you don't actually want to switch it off. Maximise Rate and you get that wibbly, slightly seasick tremolo that sounds great on guitars but a bit comedic on bass, unless, that is, you're playing low-register lines that don't reveal the effect so much.

Then you've got Bass and Treble cut and boosts, which to my ears work best when you push up the low end and centre the top: in that configuration your tone sounds truly monstrous. Add a touch of distortion from the drive pedal of your choice and you're supplied with a massive presence by any standards. The X-Over switch is a subtle effect that cuts low end from the wet signal, which is useful if your PA is a bit boomy, but should otherwise be applied with care. The build of the pedal, like all EHX products that we've seen in living memory, is solid and presumably difficult to break. Essentially it's a lump of metal that you can (probably) drop down the back of the van and retrieve unbroken. The red LED is big enough to be visible to stressed, drunk or otherwise incapable roadies too. Changing the battery could be easier in this player-friendly era, mind: you need to remove four screws to do so. If you're as impatient as we are, this will be annoying.

Otherwise, there is no downside to this ace little pedal. At this price, you'd be mad not to try it out if chorus tones are your thing.

> "ONCE YOU HEAR THAT TONE, YOU DON'T ACTUALLY WANT TO SWITCH IT OFF"

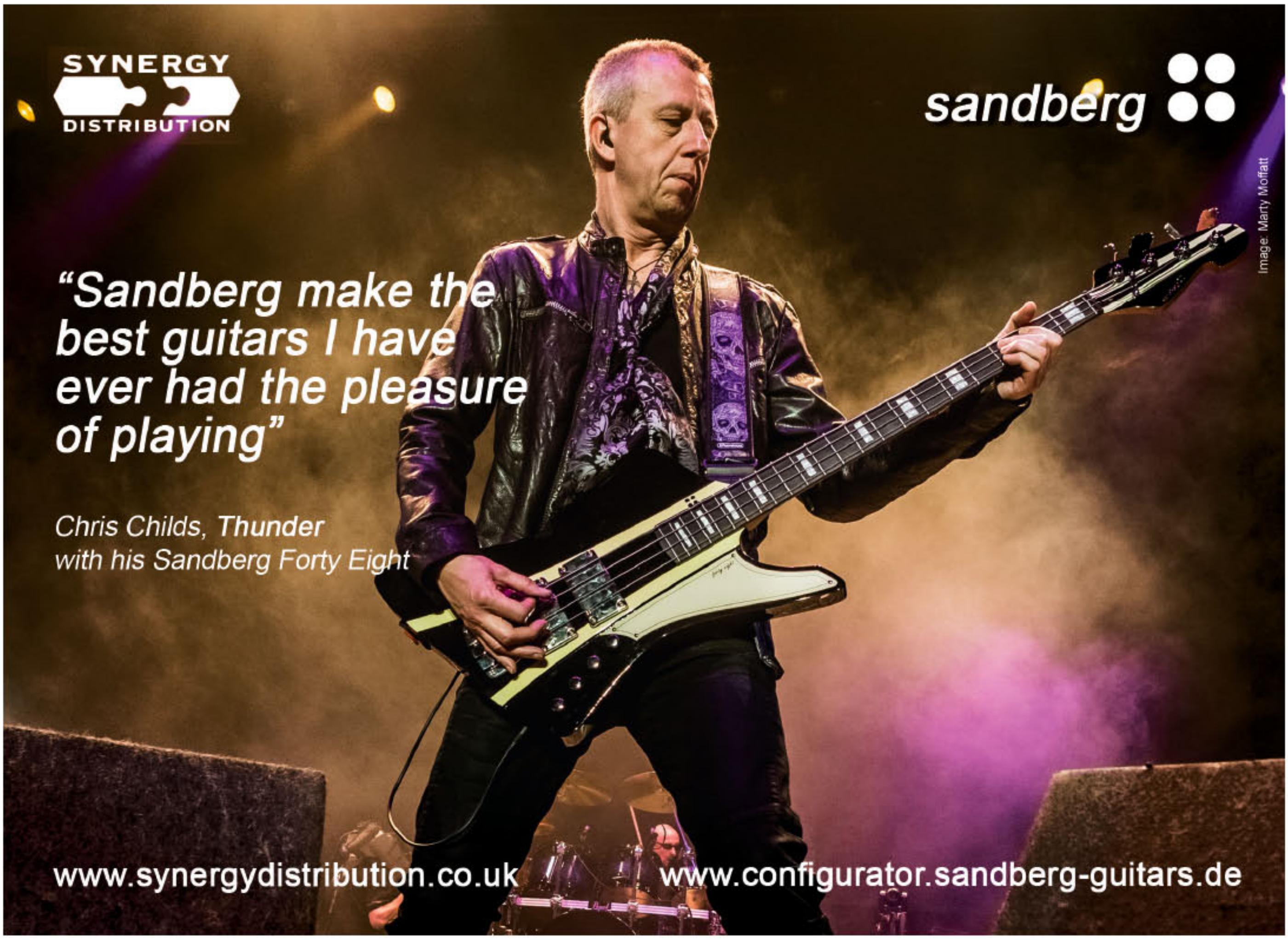
TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Price | £59
Features | Depth, Rate, Bass, Treble controls, X-Over switch
Power | 9v batteries or DC
Dimensions | 110mm L x 60mm W x 30mm H
Weight | 244g excluding battery

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Excellent range of chorus tones at bargain price
Minus | Battery changing is a pain
Overall | Highly recommended for any chorus-seeker

BUILD QUALITY	8/10
SOUND QUALITY	9/10
VALUE	10/10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BASS TUITION

Making you a better bass player

Welcome to our redesigned tuition section, in which *Bass Guitar Magazine* collates the wit and wisdom of the *crème de la crème* of the electric and upright bass world. We're fortunate enough to have some serious talent on the team, from world-class music educators to experienced touring musicians, who between them have laid down the low notes in every studio, club and arena in the civilised world. Note that we've divided the columns according to Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced level for easy reference. Whether you're looking to improve your playing technique, expand your awareness of theory, set up your rig to sound like your particular bass hero or simply get on a bus and tour, we provide the answers you need here. What are you waiting for? Dive in...

Joel McIver, editor

Ellen O'Reilly is a freelance bassist and vocalist currently studying at ICMP. Ellen has extensive experience in gigging, studio and television work.
www.lowendlady.com

ELLEN O'REILLY BEGINNER'S THEORY 72

Paul Geary attended the Berklee College of Music in Boston and the Musicians' Institute of Technology. He also heads up the Academy Of Contemporary Music's bass school.
www.paulgeary.com

PAUL GEARY BEGINNER'S TECHNIQUES 74

Stuart Clayton is a professional bassist and writer with over 20 years of experience in the industry. He runs the bass department at BIMM Bristol and Bassline Publishing, which has published a range of tuition and tab books.
www.stuartclayton.com, www.basslinepublishing.com

STUART CLAYTON INTERMEDIATE THEORY 76

Rob Statham has amassed over 25 years as a professional freelance bass player. He has played in a wide range of musical settings, including jazz, blues, prog and classical, and he has taught for the past three years at BIMM London.

ROB STATHAM INTERMEDIATE TECHNIQUES 78

Head of the Bass Department at BIMM Brighton, Franc has worked with artists such as Steve Howe (Yes), Lisa Moorish, and Mike Lindup (Level 42). Franc uses Jeff Chapman basses and Elites strings.
www.francoshea.com

FRANC O'SHEA ADVANCED THEORY 80

Say hello to advanced techniques columnist Philip Mann, star of studio and stage. Ready to get those fingers flying? Mann up...

PHILIP MANN ADVANCED TECHNIQUES 84

David Etheridge studied double bass at the Royal College of Music. Since then he's worked with musicians such as Nigel Kennedy and Martin Taylor. David teaches double and electric bass and is the MD of two big bands and a 55-piece jazz orchestra.

DAVID ETHERIDGE UPRIGHT BASS 86

Steve Lawson is the UK's most celebrated solo bass guitarist, with 15 years of touring and 36 solo and collaborative albums to his name. He also lectures at colleges around the world.
www.stevelawson.net

STEVE LAWSON EFFECTS MAESTRO 88

Andy Baxter has established a name as one of the most knowledgeable dealers of vintage basses in the UK. Andy stocks a wide range of highly collectable basses and offers a personal buying experience and excellent customer support.

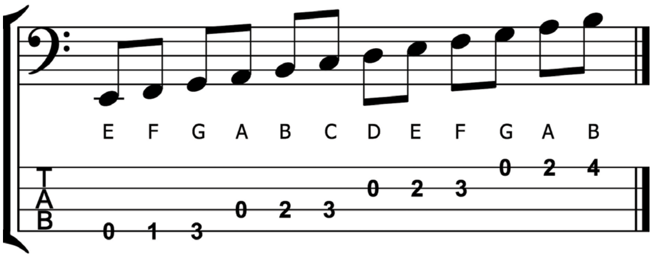
ANDY BAXTER BAXTER ON BASS 90

BGM Notation Legend

The following is a guide to the notation symbols and terminology used in *Bass Guitar Magazine*

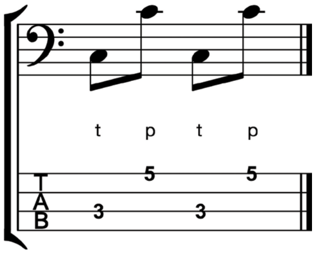
The Stave: most music written for the bass guitar uses the bass clef. The example to the right shows the placement of the notes on the stave.

Tablature: this is a graphical representation of the music. Each horizontal line corresponds with a string on the bass guitar, with the lowest line representing the lowest pitched string (E). The numbers represent the frets to be played. Numbers stacked vertically indicate notes that are played together. Where basses with five or six strings are required, the tablature stave will have five or six lines as necessary.



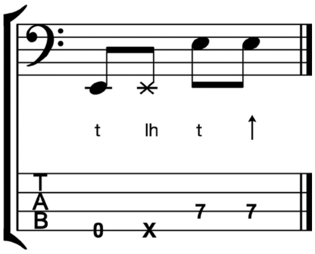
Notes shown in brackets indicate that a note has been tied over from a previous bar.

PLAYING TECHNIQUES



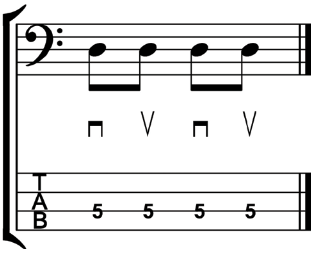
SLAP AND POP TECHNIQUE

Notes slapped with the thumb are marked with a 't', notes popped with the fingers marked with a 'p'



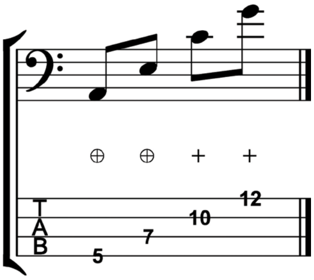
ADVANCED SLAP TECHNIQUE

Fretting hand slaps are marked 'lh' and double thumbing upstrokes are shown with an upward pointing arrow



PLECTRUM TECHNIQUE

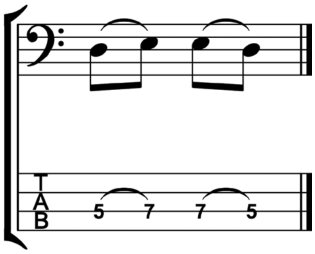
Where necessary, down and upstrokes with the pick will be shown using these symbols (down-up-down-up)



TAPPING TECHNIQUES

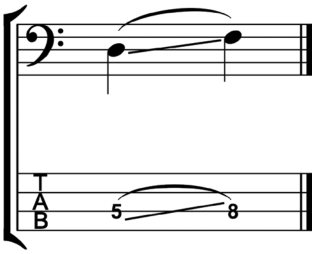
Fretting hand taps are shown with a '+' in a circle. Picking hand taps are shown with '+'. Specific fingers will be shown with numbers if necessary

FRETTING TECHNIQUES



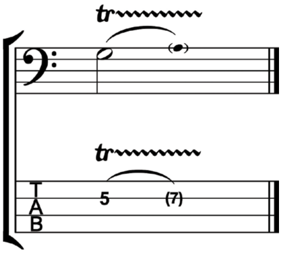
HAMMER-ON AND PULL-OFF

Hammer-ons and pull-offs are shown with a slur over the notes. Only the first note is plucked by the picking hand



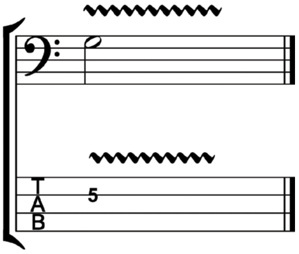
SLIDE (GLISSANDO)

Slides are performed by playing the first note then sliding the fretting finger up to the second note



TRILLS

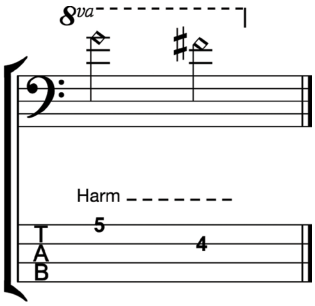
Trills are performed by rapidly alternating between the two notes shown using hammer-ons and pull-offs



VIBRATO

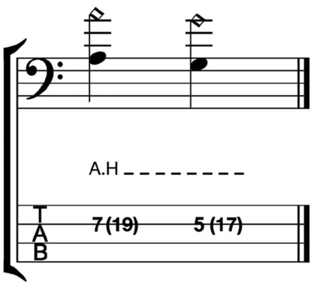
The pitch of the note is altered by repeatedly bending the string up and back with the fretting finger

PLAYING HARMONICS



NATURAL HARMONICS

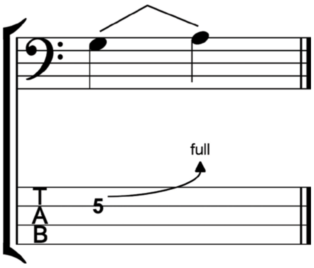
The note is played as a harmonic by lightly touching the string above the fret indicated



ARTIFICIAL HARMONICS

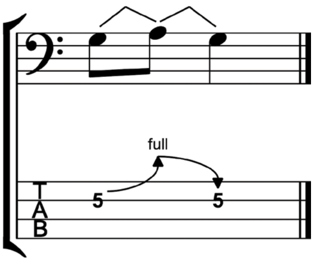
Pluck the string while fretting the lower note and placing the edge of the picking hand thumb an octave higher (the note shown in brackets)

BENDING NOTES



BEND

The note is bent upwards to the interval specified: ½ = semitone, full = tone



BEND AND RELEASE

The note is bent up to the interval indicated then released back to its original pitch

THE FRONT LINE

Want to make it as a professional bassist? Listen up as BGM's world-class bass team reports back from the tourbus

THE JAZZ BASSIST

RUTH GOLLER

Jazz ninja Ruth on the psychology of time off

Everyone that plays the double bass knows the feeling of having had a bit of time off and then getting back into playing. Every time this happens it feels like it's the first time I'm holding a bass. My hands ache straight away, and my fingers feel too weak to press the strings down onto the fretboard. I used to get very frustrated about this feeling, because every time I went on a holiday and didn't play for a bit it felt as if I had to start again. Of course, your strength returns after a few days, but still I didn't have the patience for the warm-up days that it takes to get back into regular playing. I've written in a previous column about how your mind is refreshed after taking time off from playing, and how musical ideas can seem fresh after not having thought about music for a while.

The same principle can be applied to the physical hurdle. Instead of getting frustrated, I started imagining that I was starting to play and enjoy the feeling of just playing a few notes on the bass. I try not to focus on what I can't do, and I take things really slowly. Today this scenario took place when I bowed long notes. Tuning also suffers after not having played for a while, so I started with playing open strings. After a while I started playing short melodies. I wasn't doing any exercises or scales at this point: I was simply enjoying the sound I was making. After 20 minutes I took a break and then got back on it. My body wasn't hurting, because I was so relaxed. It was a great experience to have this time to get to know my instrument again, rather than having to rush into a gig.

www.ruthgoller.com

THE METALHEAD

IVAN MUNGUIA

Deeds Of Flesh bassist Ivan on the fine art of tapping

I began using two-handed tapping on the bass, mainly because bass maestro Jeff Hughell, who played in Brain Drill before I did, left me with enormous shoes to fill. When I joined the band I was told not to worry about the tapping stuff and just follow the guitar. The tapping was just 'extra cheese on the taco' if I remember the exact words. Well, I've never been one to back down from a challenge, and I felt it would be cheating the fans since I, as a fan of the 'The Drill', saw bass tapping as an integral part of the band's sound. Also, playing the exact thing as the guitar is boring. I tend to stay away from the typical Van Halen-style three-note-per-string tapping and go for a one-note-per-string arpeggiated style.

Depending on the guitar riff or chords I am playing beneath, I'll use one of a handful of chord shapes. These shapes can be broken down into major, minor, diminished, and augmented. In simplest terms, the shapes I use mirror the bottom four notes of a barre chord on a guitar for the major and minor shapes. In the key of E this would be E, F#, E, G#, and E, F#, E, G respectively. There are two diminished shapes that I use often: again, in the key of E the notes would be E, A#, E, A# and E, G, A#, C#. Finally the augmented shape I occasionally use is E, G#, C, E. The more strings you have, the more

> "MY LEFT HAND INDEX FINGER TAPS THE FIRST NOTE AND THEN SOFTLY MUTES THE STRINGS AT THE FRETBOARD, WHILE MY RIGHT HAND TAPS THE FOLLOWING TWO NOTES: THEN EITHER MY LEFT HAND MIDDLE OR RING FINGER TAPS THE LAST NOTE AND THEN BACK DOWN THE SHAPE TO COMPLETE THE ARPEGGIO"

you can expand on these shapes. I like to arpeggiate these shapes, often using triplets. My left hand index finger taps the first note and then softly mutes the strings at the fretboard, while my right hand taps the following two notes: then either my left hand middle or ring finger taps the last note and then back down the shape to complete the arpeggio. Another tapping technique I've found myself using during double-picked riffs is to utilise the same note but on adjacent strings to create a double-picked effect. For example, I'll tap E on the fourth string with my left hand and the same octave E but on the fifth string with my right hand and keep this pattern going, moving up and down the fretboard with the riff notes. Have a question, suggestion, or hate mail? Send it over to deedsofbass@gmail.com!

www.deedsoffleshmetal.com

THE ALTERNATIVE ROCKER

MICHAEL MCKEEGAN

Therapy?'s bass monster Mike on how to handle wireless nightmares

© www-ashleybird-com

I'm sure everyone has their own war stories of equipment giving up the ghost at crucial moments: it's pretty much sod's law that the bigger the audience, the bigger the technical hitch will be. It's bad enough when it's your own fault, but it's extra frustrating when gear goes wrong due to circumstances outside your control. Nine times out of 10, problems I've had over the years have come about from wireless system malfunctions. You know, the sort of problems that only seem to occur when you're at the mercy of other people's setups, or playing an event stacked with extra production gear. Multi-band bills with live TV or radio broadcasts all bring in a lot of extraneous factors that can affect your normally reliable wireless setup. I recall a show in Romania where everything was working great at soundcheck, but when the cameras and TV production went in around our setup, everything began to play up. They had a huge generator which seemed to be intermittently spiking the power, so the amps and pedalboards kept going on and off while our meagre radio systems were picking up tons of interference from theirs. Added to the mix were a few clumsy cameramen crawling about the stage, which meant there was also a high risk of toppling over their cables – or one of them!

Thankfully nowadays there's a greater understanding of which elements of a show can prove problematic, but it's always good to have a heads-up as to what sort of equipment the broadcast people are using. Sometimes it's easy just to do a quick scan at a festival to see what other radio frequencies are being used and need to be avoided. Also, beware of having lights or monitors on the same power loom or situated too near to your wireless receivers: I've seen wireless systems drop out in time with strobe lights, while vibrations from drum fills can shake out any slightly loose cabling. Try and keep a direct line of sight between your radio transmitter and your receiver: having it behind an 8x10 cab isn't going to keep your signal solid. When we're doing any kind of live recording or broadcast, if there is even a vague possibility of something going askew, I'm happy to cut my losses early and go on a cable – if only for peace of mind.

www.therapyquestionmark.co.uk

THE EXTENDED-RANGE SPECIALIST

STEWART MCKINSEY

Ten-string maestro McKinsey on the big sounds

This issue, I'd like to address something basic: sound. Think about the sound you get now and the sound you'd like. The number of elements involved in this process, specifically for those of us who've chosen to extend our range sonically, is dizzying. Let's look at some of these things and consider what you can change. The instrument is fixed in terms of its scale length – or lengths, if your bass has fanned frets – and construction. You can always change the hardware, but this can be expensive and the results are not always pleasant. Pickups and electronics can also be changed, but this will also be costly, and if you don't know much about these things it's best to learn about them first.

In terms of the instrument physically, think more about changing strings – and even the cables you use – first. Next is your signal change. This may be as simple as changing your EQ settings, adding or subtracting an effect or looking into a different amplifier or speakers. Once again, focus on the smaller, less expensive elements first. You may be surprised what a difference they make. *You* are easiest to change: how you approach the instrument and how you play. In the past we've looked at where on the strings you play and the way you attack them. At this point I would like you to consider alternate approaches to this. Some players use their nails or even things like banjo plectrums to create different effects. Anthony Jackson knocked people out with his palm muting and playing with a pick, which creates a completely different attack and envelope for the note, allowing you to come at a passage in a very different way. Marcus Miller does this with his palm and thumb.

Have you looked at the rasgueo technique of flamenco guitarists? Try investigating the methods of classical guitarists. Your sound is your fundamental connection to your listener. In your pursuit of technique, theory and fluency, never forget that there is an ideal tone in your mind somewhere. You have probably had that in your head since before you got serious about the instrument. Keep striving for it! Just the effort to improve does more than you may realise.

www.facebook.com + search 'Stewart McKinsey'

ELLEN O'REILLY

Bass charts made easy with beginner's chum Ellen

Hi low-enders! Over the past few columns we have been looking at harmonising the major scale, as well as learning how to create chords and what they are made of. We also saw how the harmonised major scale can be used in modern popular music. As you'll recall, we derive chords from the harmonised major scale and place them in order to create chord progressions: the song is then built upon these progressions.

Each chord is assigned a roman numeral or number to make it easy to call out at a gig or to write down in a chart. To recap, here are the chords and their representative numbers and numerals of the harmonised major scale:

The 1 chord	**I**	**maj7**
The 2 chord	**II**	**min7**
The 3 chord	**III**	**min7**
The 4 chord	**IV**	**maj7**
The 5 chord	**V**	**7**
The 6 chord	**VI**	**min7**
The 7 chord	**VII**	**min7b5**

These chords can be applied to any major key, so if we were in the key of C major, the chords would be as follows:

The 1 chord	**I**	**C maj7**
The 2 chord	**II**	**D min7**
The 3 chord	**III**	**E min7**
The 4 chord	**IV**	**F maj7**
The 5 chord	**V**	**G7**
The 6 chord	**VI**	**A min7**
The 7 chord	**VII**	**B min7b5**

Likewise, if we were in the key of D major, the I chord would be D maj7, the II would be E min7, the III would be F# min7 – and so on.

Let's look at how to use this information in a real world setting. You might be on a gig where you're a dep, meaning that you're covering for the band's regular bassist, and you don't really know the songs. In that case, you might be given a chord chart or you might have to write the chords out yourself. Here's an example of a popular song, charted out:

'Firework' (Katy Perry)
Verse/Chorus
||: G Maj7 | A min7 | E min7 | C Maj7 :||
Middle 8/Bridge
| E min7 | C Maj7 | G Maj7 | D7 |
The | represents bars, so if you're in the time signature of 4/4, then in each bar you count 4 beats. The ||: on either side of a group of chords means that you repeat everything within that area.

In the example on the stave, you can see the verse/chorus section of 'Firework' with the chords above on the treble clef and the bass root notes below on TAB. Note: The chords shown wouldn't normally be written in such a close voicing: this is simply to illustrate that each chord is built up in steps of thirds.

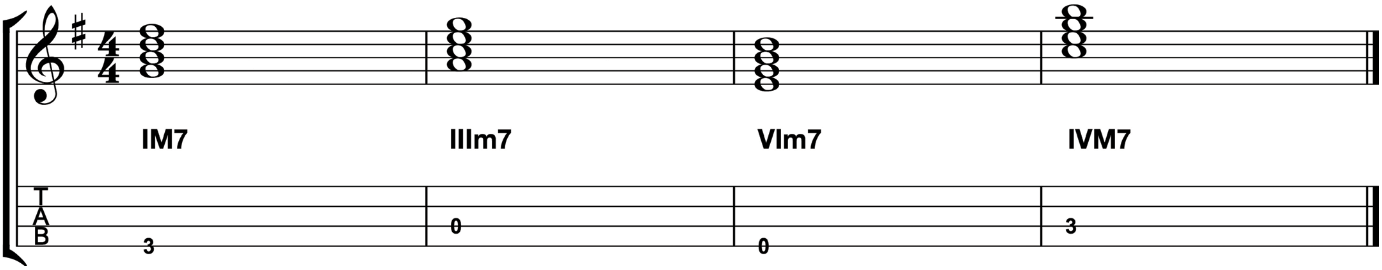
Here's another example of part of a popular song chart:

'Son Of A Preacher Man' (Dusty Springfield)
Intro:
||: E Maj7 | E Maj7 :|| X2
Verse:
| E Maj7 | A Maj7 E Maj7 | E Maj7 ||: B7 | B7 :||
Chorus:
||: E Maj7 | A Maj7 E Maj7 :|| E Maj7 B7 | A Maj7 |

Even if you can't figure out the chords when transcribing, you can just chart down the root notes or the Roman numerals for yourself and this will help you learn songs on the run. For example, in 'Firework' where the chords are ||: G | A | E | C :||, in roman numerals that would be: ||: I | II | VI| IV :||.

Try charting out songs yourself, starting with simple pop tunes and then moving on to more complex tunes. These skills will come in very useful in your career. See you next month!

EXAMPLE 1



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PAUL GEARY

Commander Geary takes us into a slow blues shuffle

This month we're going to take a look at a slow blues shuffle chart. It uses many of the techniques we have looked at over the last few columns, including the triplet. Let's try and include some of these as we run through the chart. Make sure your articulation is tight and played with precision, using alternate fingers on the plucking hand. It's really important to get the feel just right. Using alternate fingers in a walking action will allow the song to feel even and the bass tone to be full and fat.

The chart starts with a 'pick up' bar using an eighth note triplet. This phrase sets the mood of the track. We then start the chart with an eighth note on beat one of the first bar which is the last note of the repeating motif. Notice that the eighth note has a dot underneath it. This means that we need to play the note staccato, or short.

Continue this phrase up to bar seven. We then play a staccato crotchet on A as we build into bar eight, which is an A dominant 7th chord. At this point we need to choose a line from our repertoire of blues licks.

To get started, let's use a steady quarter note pulse over the chord changes. Bars nine and 10 are played over a D dominant 7th chord: we then switch back to an A dominant 7th chord over bars 11 and 12. Over these two bars, try out a conventional blues pattern using the root, major 3rd, perfect 5th, major 6th and the minor 7th intervals of the dominant 7th chord.

Bar 13 through to bar 16 is the turnaround sequence. This starts with an E dominant 7th chord at bar 13. In this bar, try using the root of the chord which is E, followed by the major 3rd, G# and the perfect 5th B. Finish off the sequence by returning to the root of E. Each note can be played as a crotchet: most importantly, try to recognise the shape which the arpeggio makes. This will help to build muscle memory within the progression.

Use the exact same sequence in bar 14 over the D dominant seventh chord. The intervals would be the root of D, the major 3rd, which is an F#, and the perfect 5th, which is an A note. Over the A dominant 7th use the A, followed by a C#, a perfect 5th (which is E) and then we come back to the major 3rd of the chord, which is a C#. This sequence of notes sets up the final bar, which reverts back to the original motif using an eighth note triplet.

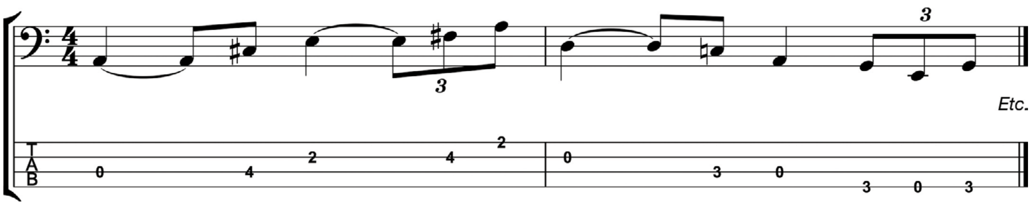
Run the 16 bars a couple of times before moving onto the guitar solo at bar 17. Here we need to switch back to crotchets and play a steady pulse to support the guitar solo through the chord changes. The form here switches to a 'quick change' 12-bar blues in A. Play this arrangement twice, taking the repeat at bar 28, which is played over an E dominant 7th chord. All 12 bars need to be consistent, both rhythmically and dynamically. Try to build up to the 'burn' feel. This is where you can really stretch your legs, using various arpeggios to create the groove through the arrangement.

The examples from bar 29 through to 32 show how to play behind the soloist, while still having dynamic impact. In general terms, when the drummer switches to the ride cymbal, you should switch up a gear and support the whole band in driving the song along.

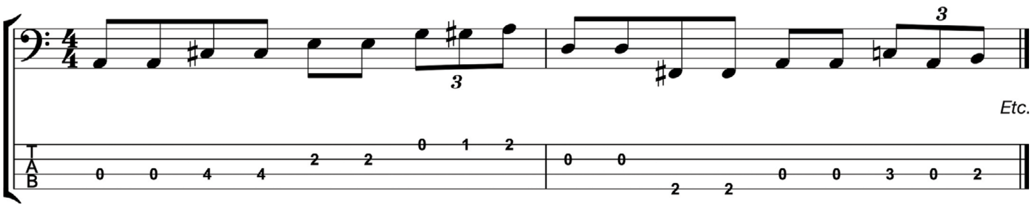
Example 1 at bar 29 starts with an A crotchet tied to an eighth note. Make sure you hold this for the correct duration. We then have a C# eighth note followed by an E crotchet, which is tied to the first eighth note of the triplet. Bar 30 is almost a repeat rhythmically, except for the crotchet on A played on beat three. We then have the original eighth note triplet motif, which has been the feature throughout the whole progression.

Example 2 at bar 31 is the burn feel. This is played using straightahead eighth notes to create the groove. The final bar, 32, starts with two D notes followed by a low F# and two A notes. Watch out for the first eighth note of the triplet. I'm using a C natural there and B on the last beat. Try using these examples within the guitar solo sequence.

EXAMPLE 1



EXAMPLE 2



This next example, although a blues progression, actually draws upon some jazz within the chord changes. Bar one starts with a C root followed by a major third, and incorporates an interval skip using a dotted eighth note on F sharp and a sixteenth note on G at the end of the first bar. This leads nicely into bar two, which is an F dominant seventh chord. At the end of this bar I have written in an eighth note triplet. Remember that a triplet essentially fits three notes into the space of two. We then have bars three and four played over the

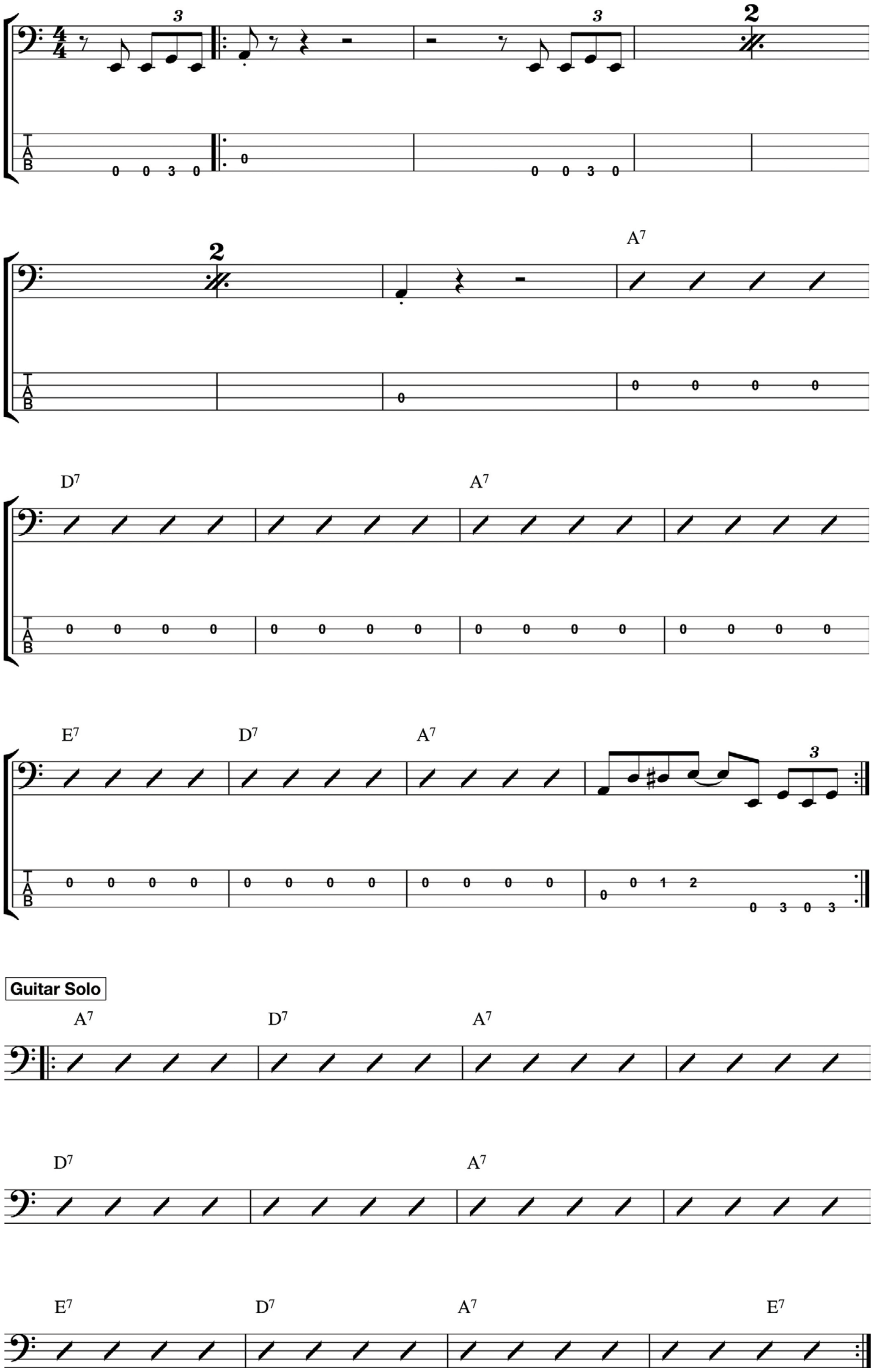
SLOW BLUES

C dominant seventh chord. The E note at the end of bar four is just a chromatic half step away from the F note in bar five, which is the root of the F dominant 7th chord. This is called voice leading.

You will notice as you play through the notes, that although this is essentially a 12-bar blues, there is no actual shape you can lock into as with a conventional blues. You have to know the notes of the arpeggio, rather than playing a standard blues shape over the chord. It really depends on the situation, but having this variation makes for some interesting walking lines through the progression. Work through the bars, taking the repeat at the end, and try to memorise the whole progression. This is really doable even though the chord arpeggios are not repeated. As you become familiar with the line, try to incorporate some of your own ideas and draw upon the other columns in this series for inspiration.

The last progression is a standard 12-bar walking blues, slow change. I wanted to finish with something pretty basic, which should enable you to try out your own ideas over the chord changes. Remember to keep your tempo at a speed where errors are minimal. Keep the line flowing and dig in with your plucking hand to project the notes. Don't forget to dampen with your fretting hand to stop any unwanted string ringing.

I'll see you next time for some jazz blues!



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STUART CLAYTON

The mighty Clayton continues his epic soloing series

Welcome back to my column on learning to play basic solos. So far we've been learning how to use chord tones to write and improvise simple solos over the traditional 12-bar blues and the ii-V-I progression. In this month's installment we're going to look at another form of blues – the jazz blues. There's a lot to take in this month, so be sure to work through everything slowly and feel free to drop me an email with any questions.

THE JAZZ BLUES

The jazz blues is another 12-bar blues progression, although with a more sophisticated chord progression. Over the years, jazz musicians began adding to the basic three-chord progression in order to make it a more interesting vehicle to solo over. The version of the jazz blues that we'll be looking at today is the most common, but there are lots of variations on this main theme.

Some brief points to note:

■ The use of the IV chord in the second bar. This is by no means unique to the jazz blues: many traditional blues songs, such as 'Sweet Home Chicago' feature this variation.

■ A ii-V progression (Cm7 – F7) sets up the move to the IV chord at bar five (note that Cm7 and F7 are chords ii and V in the key of Bb).

■ Another ii-V progression is used in bar eight to ease the transition to the Gm7 chord (Am7 – D7, chords ii and V in the key of G).

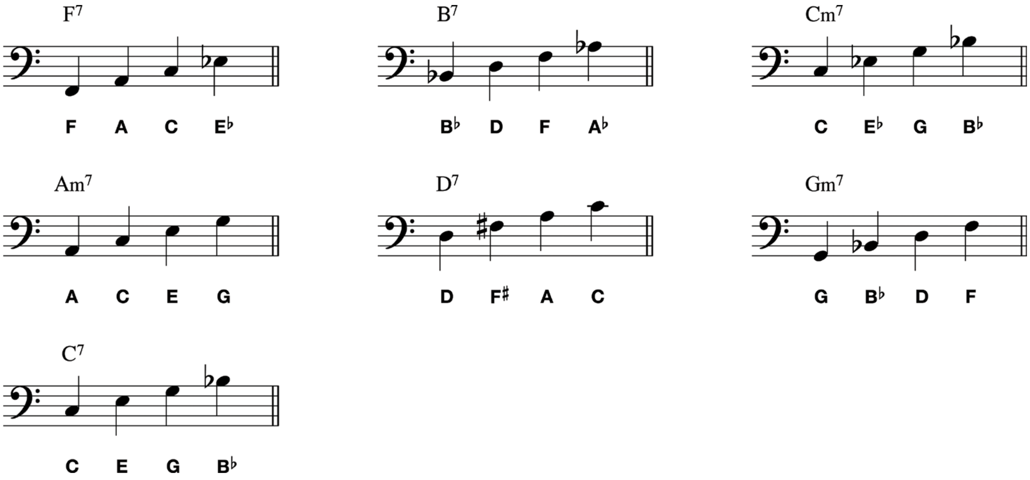
■ Bars nine and ten are a longer ii-V progression in the key of F.

■ The final two bars consist of two ii-V progressions, which cycle neatly back to the beginning of the sequence.

As you can see, this jazz blues is in the key of F. You'll also notice that there are a few chords that we have not looked at in this column. I have listed all of the chords below and written out their chord tones.

EXAMPLE 1

Before working on the jazz blues, it would be a good idea to familiarise yourself properly with the chords in **example 1**. Play them as arpeggios over one and two octaves, saying the notes out loud as you do so. We covered ways to learn arpeggios back in the first installment of this column (issue 132).

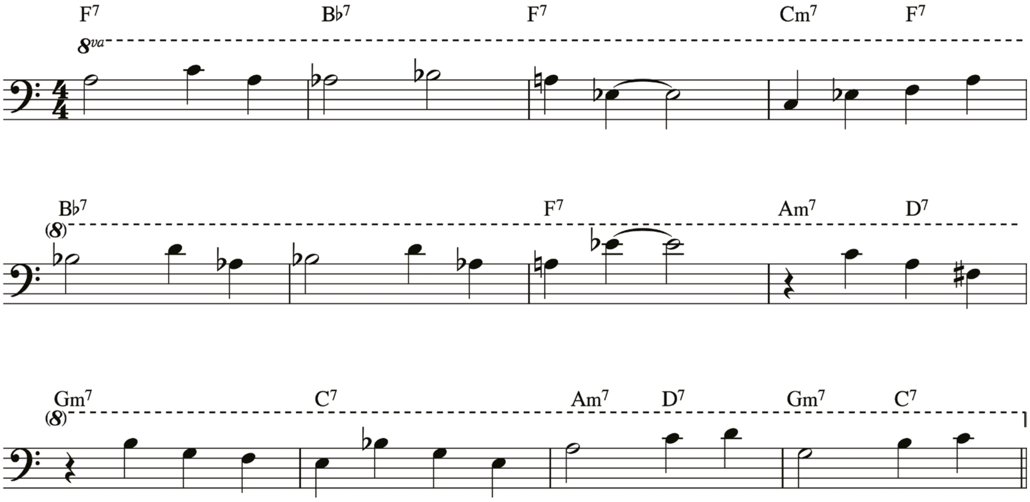


SOLOING ON THE JAZZ BLUES

The following four exercises are solos over the jazz blues progression. These can either be played in isolation, or strung together for one long solo.

EXAMPLE 2 – JAZZ BLUES SOLO #1

As we've done with all of our solos so far, this one uses only very basic rhythms – minims and crotchets. Note that the root notes for the chords are not always used as they usually make phrases sound too 'obvious'. This is a simple solo but you should hear that it is very effective for the progression.



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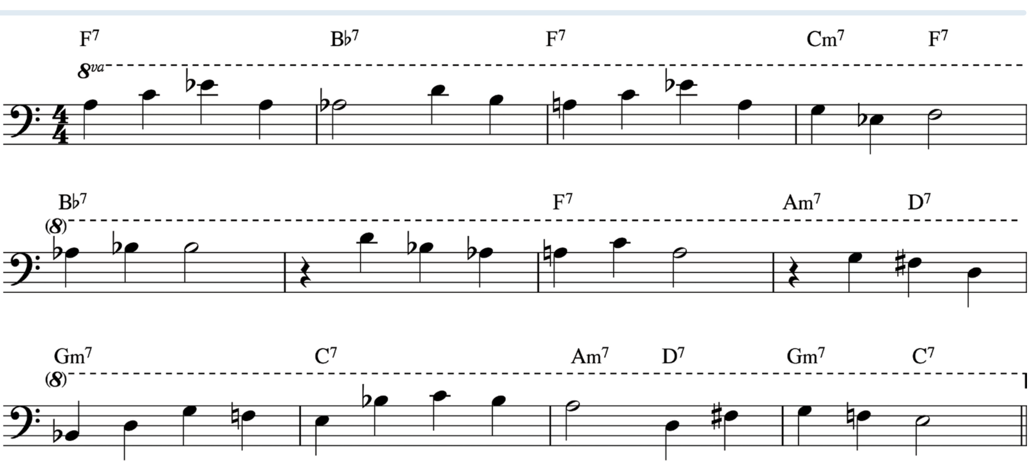
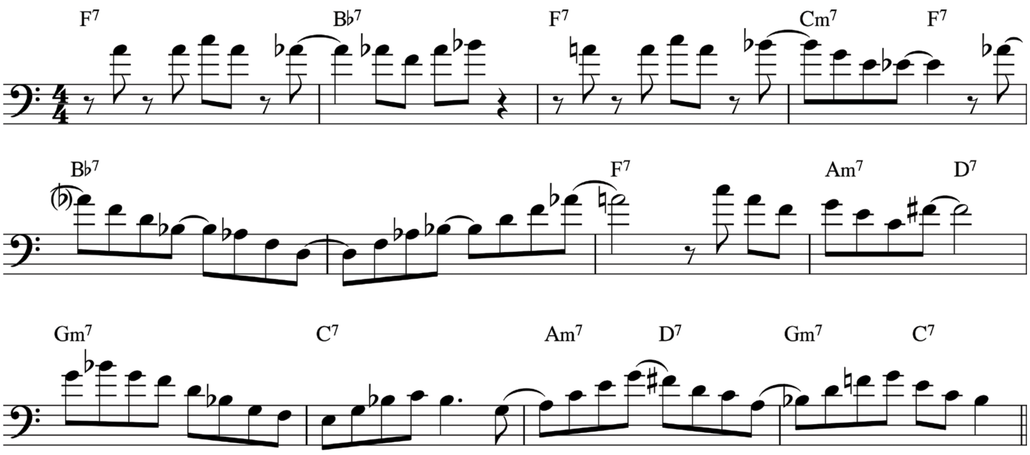
EXAMPLE 3 – JAZZ BLUES SOLO #2



Again this solo uses only minims and crotchets, although I've attempted to add a little more movement to the line this time. Remember that although this is a simple solo, you should aim to be so familiar with the chord tones for each chord that you can improvise very rhythmically simple solos using just these notes. Although we're approaching this from a blues/jazz point of view, it's an approach that will work in any style. Note that **examples 2** and **3** should be played an octave higher than written, as indicated by the '8va' marking.

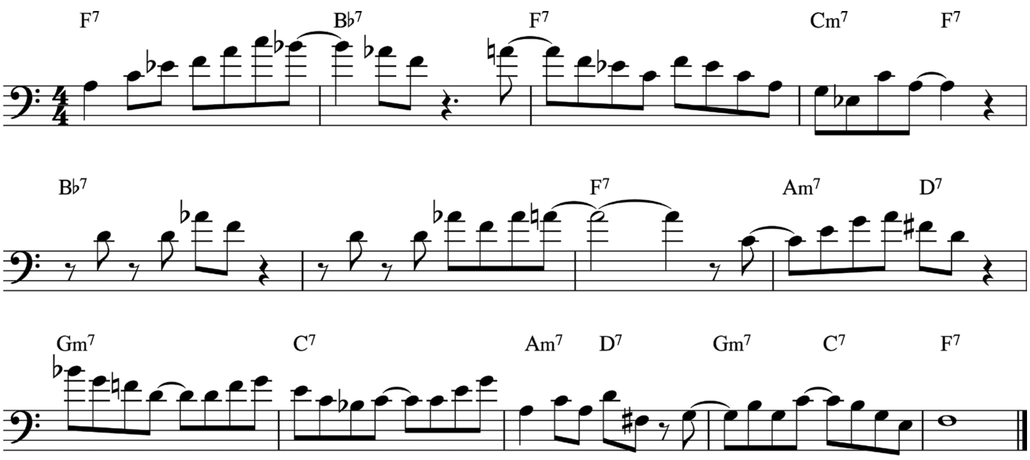
EXAMPLE 4 – JAZZ BLUES SOLO #3



We're taking things up a notch now and using quaver-based rhythms. Although this looks far more complex on paper, remember that we're still just using chord tones. Note that the phrase played in the first bar is 'answered' by the phrase in the second. The first phrase is then reused in the third bar when the chord changes back to F7. This simple idea gives your solo a 'shape' while also allowing you some time to think about your next move! In bars five and six we descend through the Bb7 arpeggio and then work back up. This simple idea is played with a syncopated rhythm to make it less obvious.

As you'll have learnt from last month's column, the ii-V progression is very important in jazz. There are several ii-V's in the final bars here and you should take your time to become comfortable with the phrases I've written. If there are any that you like, try to remember them and learn to transpose them, as needed, to other ii-V's. Doing so will ensure that they become part of your own soloing vocabulary.

EXAMPLE 5 – JAZZ BLUES SOLO #4



This is another more complex solo. By now you can hopefully see that it's possible to write and improvise a good solo using quite limited melodic and rhythmic material. As mentioned, be sure to learn all of the ii-V phrases carefully, noting how the chord tones are used. If you learn them thoroughly and learn to transpose them, they'll be available to you when soloing in future.

That's it for this month. We've covered a lot! Over the next couple of months, we are going to look at playing simple solos over common chord progressions, using only chord tones. Until then...

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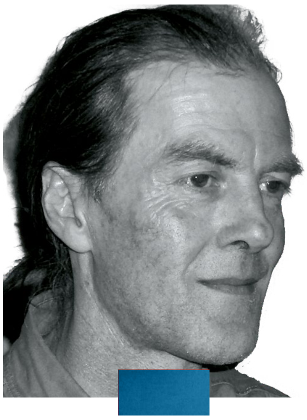
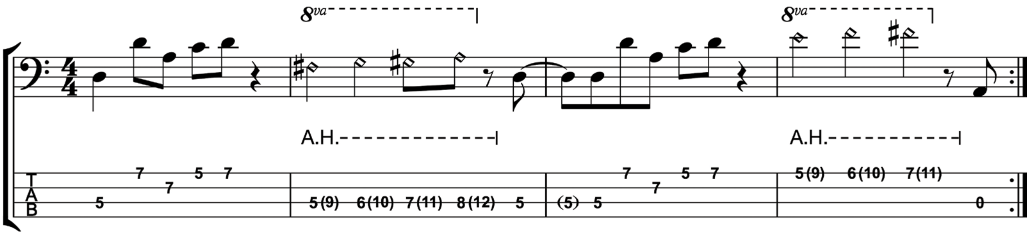


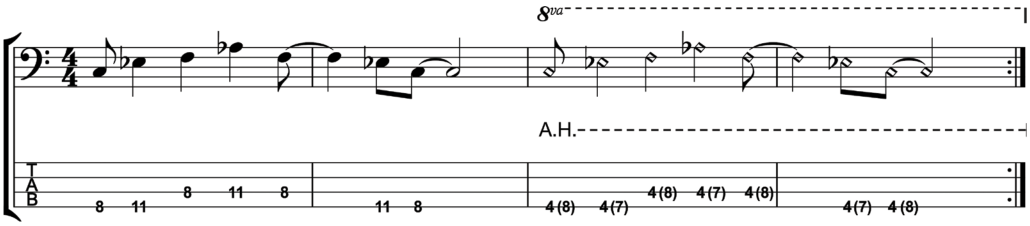
ROB STATHAM

Master false harmonics with maestro Rob Statham

EXAMPLE 1



EXAMPLE 2



Let's revisit the topic of false harmonics and suggest some further possibilities. When considering harmonics, we can separate them into two general categories – natural harmonics and false harmonics. Natural harmonics are found on the open strings at various subdivisions of the string length, which means we're limited to some extent as to which notes are available. For instance, on a four-string bass there is no Eb or Bb available as a natural harmonic in conventional tuning, and even the notes that are are only available in certain octaves. So we can, for example, play an F natural as a natural harmonic but only in one register, two octaves and a minor 7th above the open G. If we wanted to play an F natural one octave and a minor 7th above, the open G, there is no way to do this as a natural harmonic. This is where false harmonics can be useful to us, as they provide a means to play any note, in any register, as a harmonic.

There are two basic ways of creating false harmonics, which I refer to as the fretting hand and plucking hand method. As this would suggest, the harmonic can be created either in the fretting or plucking hand. So if we use the fretting hand approach, the plucking hand plays as normal, and if we use the plucking hand method then the fretting hand is similarly as normal. The fretting hand method involves holding down a note with the first finger and then stretching up on the same string to sound a harmonic with another finger at a higher fret. So, for example, if you hold down an E at the seventh fret on the A string with the first finger, it's possible to then make a four-fret stretch on the same string, lightly touch the G# at the 11th fret, and sound a harmonic. This is equivalent to playing a natural harmonic at the fourth fret of an open string, the fifth harmonic in the harmonic series, and will produce a note two octaves higher than a note fretted at that position. The plucking hand method involves placing the thumb of the plucking hand

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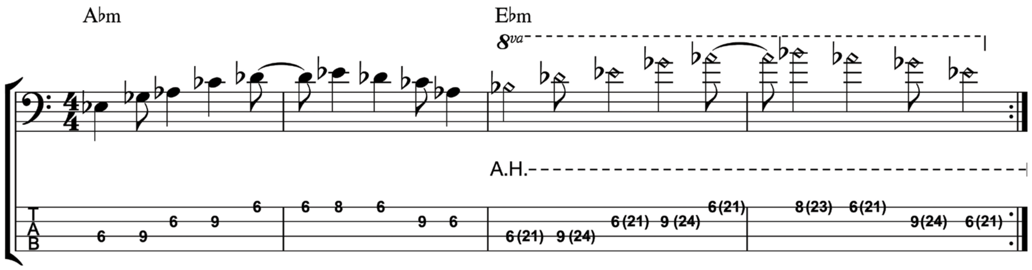
at a point between a fretted note and the bridge, corresponding to a specific subdivision of the string, and then plucking behind the thumb. So, for instance, if you hold down a G natural at the 12th fret on the G string, place the plucking hand thumb lightly on the string exactly midway between the fretted note and the bridge, then pluck behind the thumb with the first finger of the plucking hand, you will produce a G natural an octave higher than the fretted position. This is equivalent to playing a natural harmonic at the 12th fret on an open string.

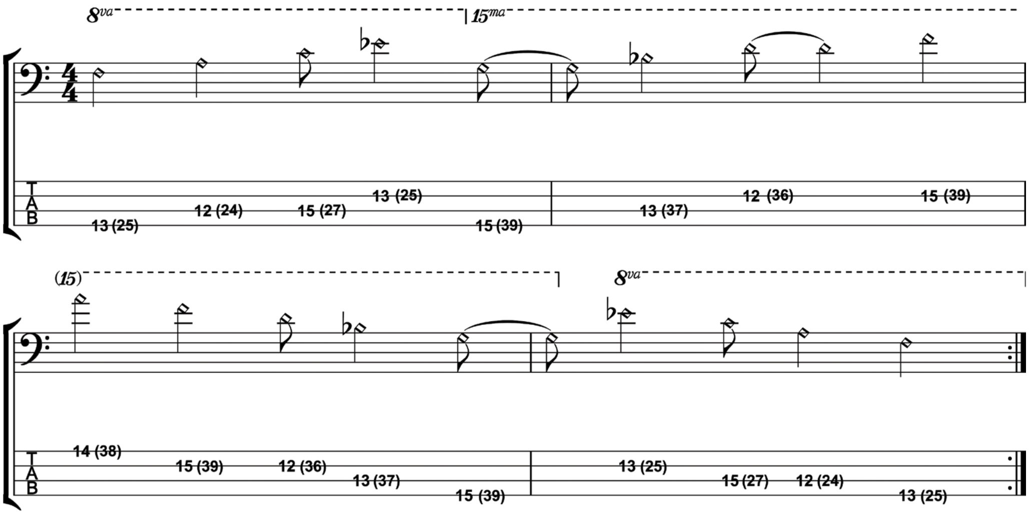
In **example 1** I incorporate some false harmonics into a four-bar groove on a D7 tonality using the fretting hand method. So, at the start of the second bar, you will need to hold down the note at the fifth fret on the A string with the first finger, and play the false harmonic at the ninth fret, as per the tab, with the fourth finger. The line then moves up chromatically, so, on the second beat of the second bar, you'll need to hold down the note at the sixth fret on the A string with the first finger, the fourth finger then playing the harmonic at the 10th fret as per the tab, and so on. It's the same idea in the fourth bar too, although here we're playing false harmonics on the G rather than A string, but the method is the same.

Example 2 is a variation on this idea, still using the fretting hand method to create a false harmonic but adding another aspect to the concept. So here, in the first two bars, we have an F minor pentatonic lick notated to be played in the usual way. This is then echoed in the next two bars by the same lick played two octaves higher by use of false harmonics. Here, however, I make the false harmonic four frets higher than the note held down by the first finger, as with the first example, but then this is followed by the note three frets higher. This is equivalent to playing the harmonics at the fourth and third fret on an open string, giving us two notes a minor 3rd apart. You'll need to keep your first finger holding an Ab on the E string for both harmonics, and a Db on the A string. The result of this is that by following the tab we will produce the minor pentatonic line, as in the first two bars, a semitone movement back, resulting in a note a minor third higher when played as a false harmonic in this manner. You might find it easiest to make all the notes using the fourth finger, making a three-fret stretch with the third finger rather difficult: higher up the neck it might become feasible.

EXAMPLE 3



EXAMPLE 4



Example 3 uses the plucking hand method to create false harmonics. As in the previous example, the first two bars contain a minor pentatonic idea, in this case in the key of Ab minor, played using standard technique. This is then echoed in the third and fourth bar using false harmonics, but in another key, an octave and a perfect 5th higher, so in the key of Eb minor. Thus the tab doesn't change and we are still fretting the notes in exactly the same position, but we will need to find the place where the action of placing the thumb of the plucking hand on the string then plucking behind it will produce a note an octave and a 5th higher than the fretted tone.

You should find it somewhere between the front pickup and the neck, though it may take a little trial and error before you locate it. These 'imaginary' fret positions are shown in the TAB in brackets and will be easier to find if you are using a 24-fret bass. When you do find that first Bb, by mirroring the fretting hand shape in the plucking hand you'll be able to produce the pentatonic figure in the new key as written. Here, rather than halving the string to create an octave, we are dividing the string length into thirds, so it is rather like playing a D natural harmonic at the 19th fret on an open G string.

In **example 4,** I'm again using the plucking hand method to create false harmonics, although in this instance it is to obtain notes an octave (and then two octaves) higher by first halving the string length and then quartering it. Again, it might take a certain amount of trial and error to find the right location to produce the note, but you should find that on a bass with two pickups, the octave higher will be found somewhere just in front of the front pickup, and two octaves higher somewhere just in front of the back pickup. Notice that by obtaining the higher octave notes in this way it means the fretting hand doesn't have to move and can stay in one position.

Both these methods of obtaining false harmonics are worth spending some time with, and will let you play any note in any position as a harmonic. Work on these examples, explore the technique and see what you can come up with.

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FRANC O'SHEA

Advanced harmonics on bass, brought to you by the great Franc O'Shea

Over the next few columns I will be looking at playing harmonics on the electric bass and exploring how this natural phenomenon can not only enhance the scope of your playing, but can also be used to create unaccompanied bass pieces. To start off I will be examining single-note harmonics before moving on to the formation of chords, and then I will be looking at an entire solo composition.

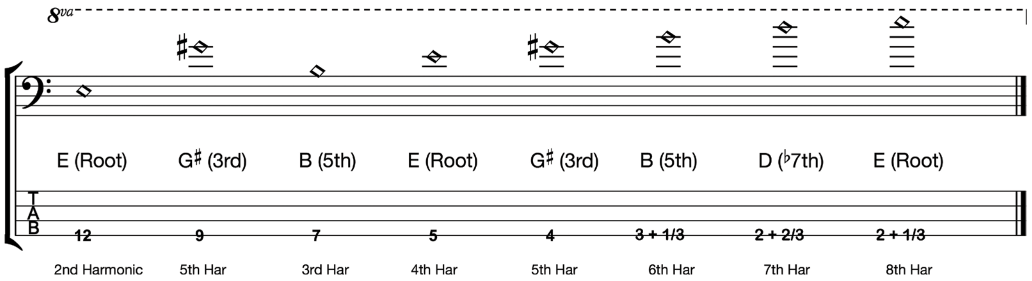
The use of harmonics on the electric bass came to the fore when Jaco Pastorius released his eponymous debut album in 1976, and particularly with the harmonics-driven piece composed for his first wife, 'Portrait Of Tracy'. In a video interview from his *Modern Electric Bass* DVD with Jerry Jemmott, Jaco explains that he started exploring harmonics after a friend showed him how to tune his bass using them. 'Portrait' appears as a pastiche of Jaco's explorations woven into a tightly knit composition that is coherent throughout.

However, as Jemmott points out, harmonics are an integral part of most instruments which produce complex waveforms, and are a natural occurrence. Although guitarists use harmonics as well, bassists have a slight advantage since the octaves that they appear in are usually in the higher range, many of which become lost with guitar but remain in a comfortable range with bass.

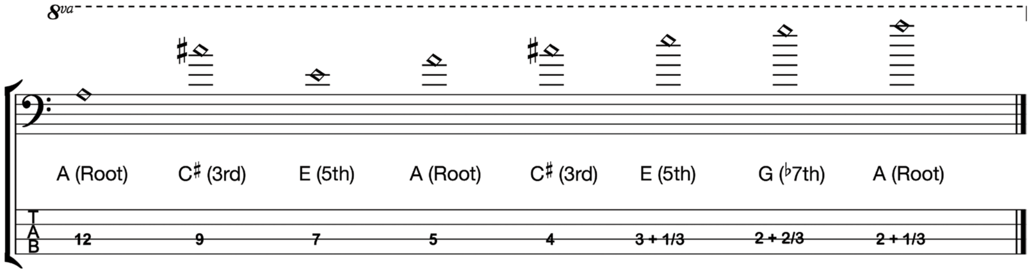
When I first heard 'Portrait Of Tracy' back in the 80s, I wanted to investigate harmonics further. Sadly, at that time there wasn't the plethora of books, footage and other educational material that we now have at our disposal, so I was exceptionally delighted to find a copy of Adam Novick's *Harmonics for Electric Bass* in a local bookshop. Published in 1980, it is still the authority on harmonics for electric bass and was obviously a labour of love for the author. Owning this book is a must for anyone who wishes to undertake a deep study of harmonics and it is full of useful diagrams, examples and information. Used copies are available online and are well worth the investment.

Let's turn to this month's exercises. **Examples 1** to **4** demonstrate for each string, starting from the E string to the G string, where the most prominent harmonics are and what their interval type is against the open string, with the tab stating at what fret they occur. Since harmonics are in some parts slightly outside of the standard 'equal temperament' used in the West, we find that they don't always correlate with a fret position in the higher ranges, which is why I have indicated fractions of the frets for the 6th, 7th and 8th harmonics.

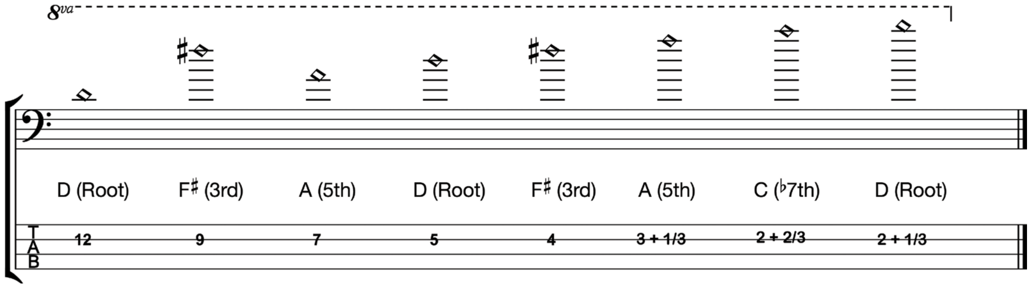
EXAMPLE 1



EXAMPLE 2



EXAMPLE 3



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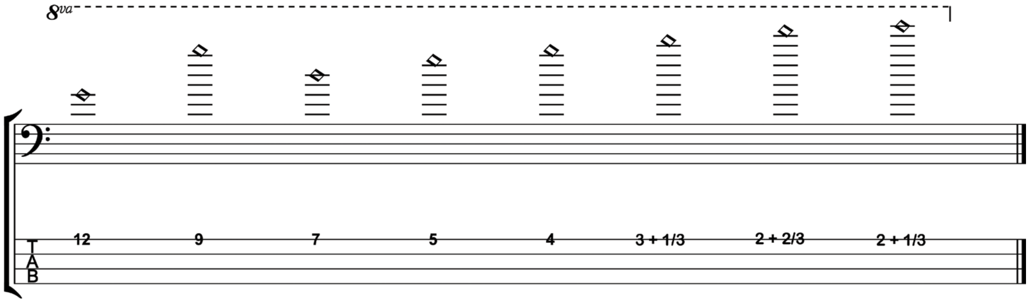
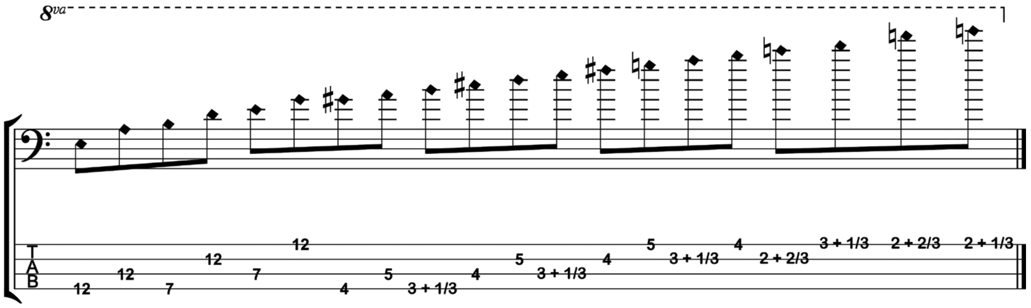
EXAMPLE 4



EXAMPLE 5



It is worth noting that harmonics can also be called 'overtones'; however, the numbers designated to harmonics and overtones are different, often causing confusion. With harmonics, the open string is regarded as the first harmonic: the nodal point at the twelfth fret – achieved by lightly plucking the string, but not pressing it down so that it frets – is regarded as the second harmonic (see **example 1**). However, with overtones the open string is regarded as the fundamental and the nodal point at the 12th fret is regarded as the first overtone.

Example 5 demonstrates how a harmonic scale of sorts can be achieved by playing the available series of ascending harmonics through the strings. Novick provides a very clear diagram of this in his book.

I hope you enjoy exploring this wonderful area of bass playing for yourself: in my next column I will be looking at creating chords with harmonics. Until then...

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PHIL MANN

A refreshing new learning approach from Professor Mann

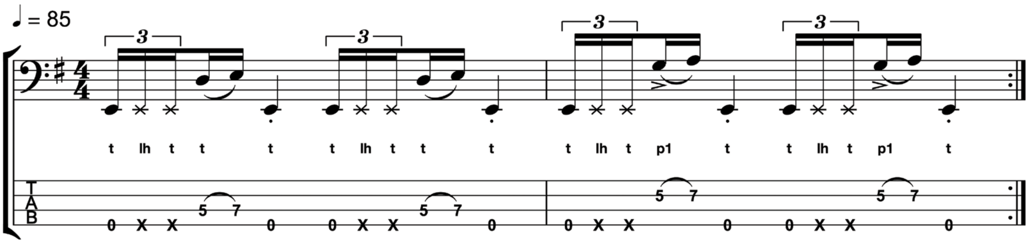
All too often I hear bassists referring to being stuck in a rut with their playing. I have often wondered what it is that really causes this, as more commonly it doesn't appear to be newer, more zealous players who have to deal with it. In my experience, 'rut syndrome' is often more apparent in established instrumentalists who have been studying for a period, yet somehow find themselves low on inspiration and motivation.

Focusing on new subject matter is all too often prescribed as a way to cure the 'rut': however, this isn't always the best solution. So many practising instrumentalists are taught that the answer to development and progress is always new information. For example, once you've studied triads, look at 7th arpeggios, then study pentatonic scales before taking a look at modes, and so on. Perhaps it's innovative thinking that's needed rather than a deeper mine of information to work from.

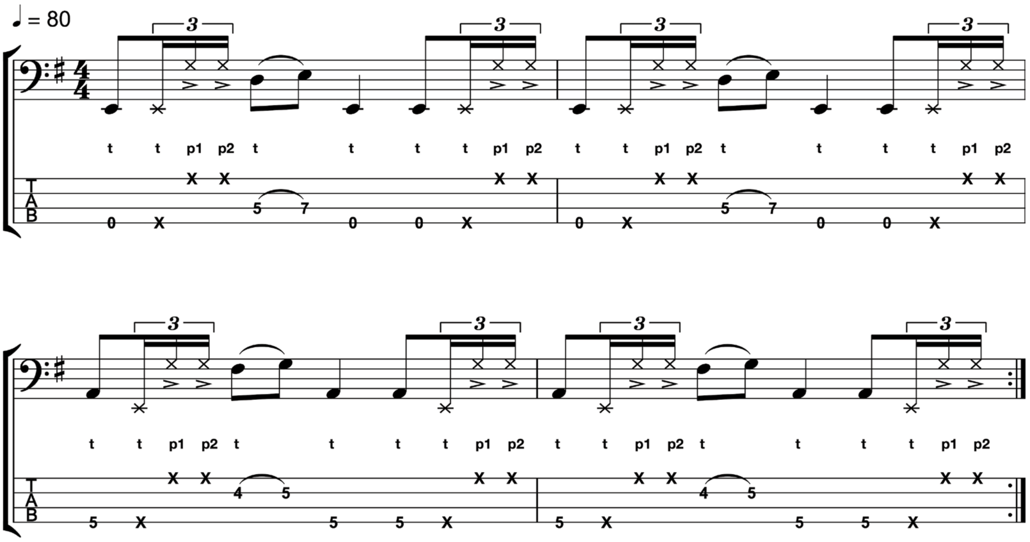
In the last few instalments of this column, we have been studying in some depth the sort of semiquaver triplets found in **figure 1**. The obvious train of thought would be to move on and find a new subject matter, right? No. What we're going to do now is further deepen our understanding of the technique by applying permutation methodology.

Figure 1 uses a combination of left and right hands to execute a semiquaver triplet. However, the following exercises implicate two different factors in an attempt to broaden and strengthen the understanding of the

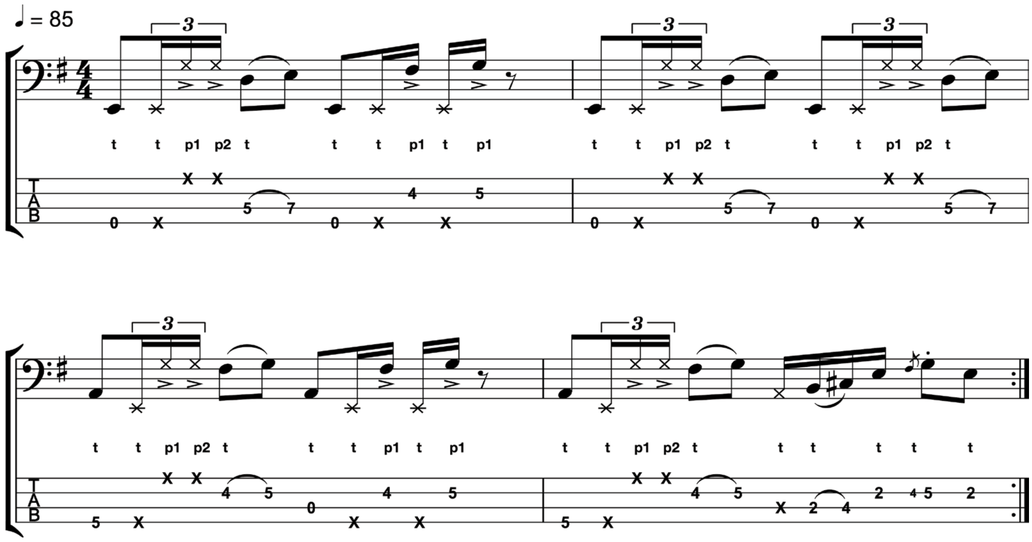
FIGURE 1



EXAMPLE 1



EXAMPLE 2



initial technique. The first, found in **example 1**, is a simple move, placing the semiquaver triplet on the offbeat rather than on the beat itself. The second is to apply a permutation in an attempt to change the delivery method of the triplet. Differing from **figure 1**, this example uses an initial thumb strike succeeded by two plucks (p1, p2) to create the triplet.

Example 2 persists with the triplet delivery devised in **example 1**, using the same thumb, pluck (p1), pluck (p2) methodology. However, in this example, two other components also become apparent that continue to apply to the remainder of this month's exercises. The first is the rhythmic information found on beat one of the first bar that will continue to establish an underlying groove and an air of familiarity in all of the succeeding patterns. The second component also showcased is the melodic phrase found at the end of bar four: this lick has been primarily produced using a Dorian vocabulary and is influenced by the great Marcus Miller.

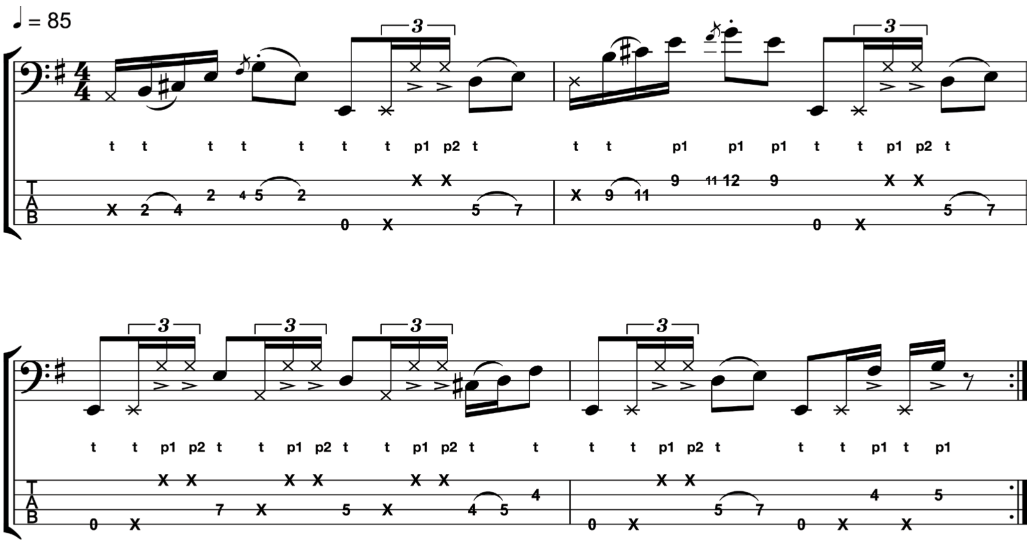
Example 3 once again features the Dorian phrase found in the final bar of **example 2**, this time also delivered in a higher octave. You may find bar three particularly taxing, as our semiquaver triplets now appear on all of the first three beats of the bar.

Example 4 uses an element of ostinato to create an air of call and response to the groove. Hopefully you will notice that bars one and three are essentially composed of the same genetics: once again they use two octaves as per **example 3**, but on this occasion you will also need to be aware of a slight variation in the articulation that's present. **Example 4** also takes the delivery of our semiquaver triplets to an entirely new level.

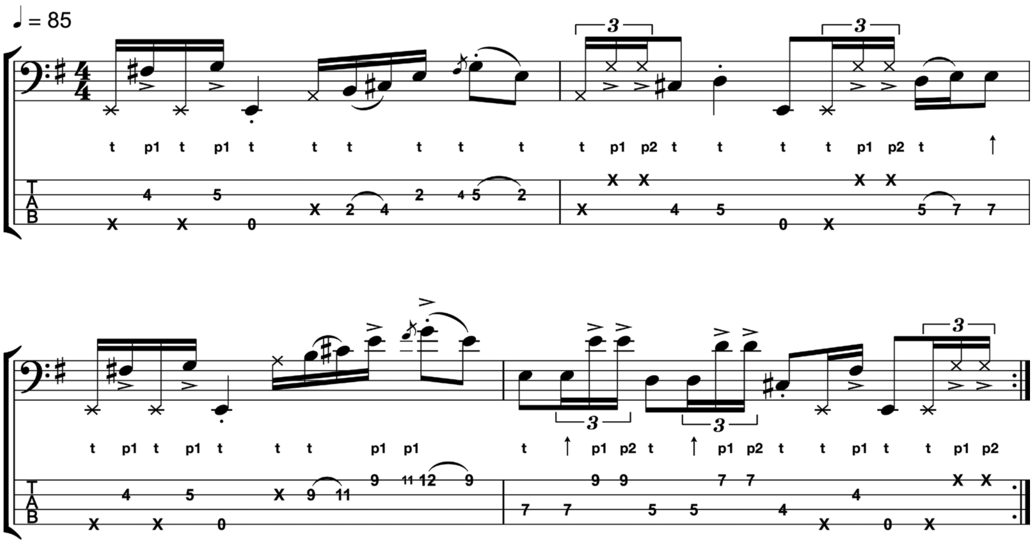
Take a look at the final bar and you'll notice that instead of using either of the 'thumb, left-hand, thumb' or 'thumb, pluck (p1), pluck (p2)' approaches already encountered, this time we are confronted with an entirely new delivery method. In order to cleanly execute the melodic information found on beat one of bar four, you first need to strike the fundamental and allow your thumb to come to rest on the fretboard directly beneath the string. You will then find yourself in an ideal position to be able to deliver the first of the triplet notes as an upstroke. The remaining two pitches are then generated through the application of double plucking. It's the same rhythmic delivery, just a different approach.

That's it for this month. Until next time, practise hard!

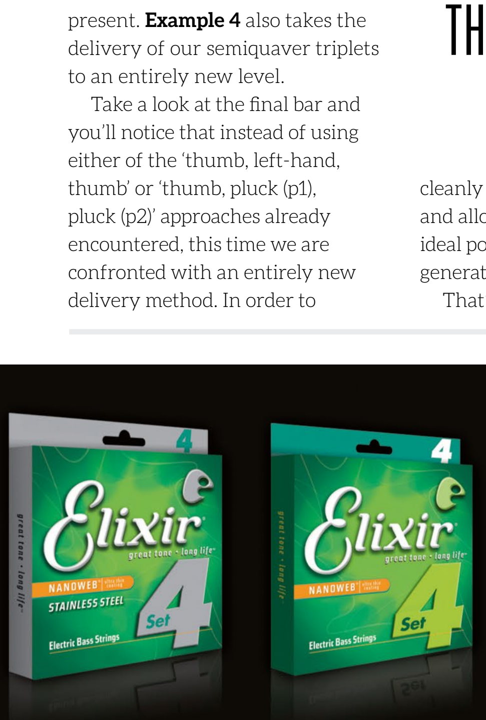
EXAMPLE 3



EXAMPLE 4



> "MANY PRACTISING INSTRUMENTALISTS ARE TAUGHT THAT THE ANSWER TO DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS IS ALWAYS NEW INFORMATION"



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DAVID ETHERIDGE

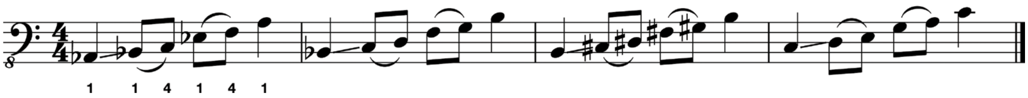
Hammering and sliding in more difficult keys, with upright bass guru David Etheridge

Last month we looked at hammers and slides in fairly easy keys, and using open strings as part of our musical phrase. All well and good – but what do you do when you're playing in other keys apart from E, A, D and G?

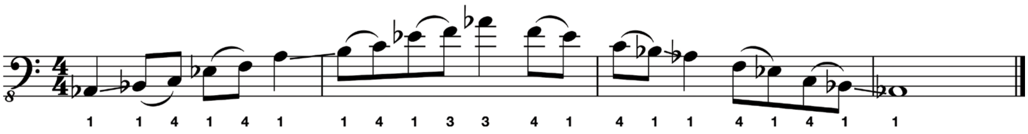
Especially if you're a jazz player, you'll find that brass and reed players inevitably choose a flat key for a particular tune: I've yet to find a brass or woodwind player who relishes the thought of playing in B or F#, just to give an example.

Fear not, we can use a variety of sliding and hammer techniques in just about any key you like. **Example 1** shows the same phrase in Ab, Bb, B and C. Slide up to the second note from the first, and hammer on the rest, or pluck the first note on a new open string: Eb and top Ab in **example 1**, and so on in each key. Note that the fingering is exactly the same in each key: we're using standard fingering, which helps when trying 'difficult' keys as well as easy ones.

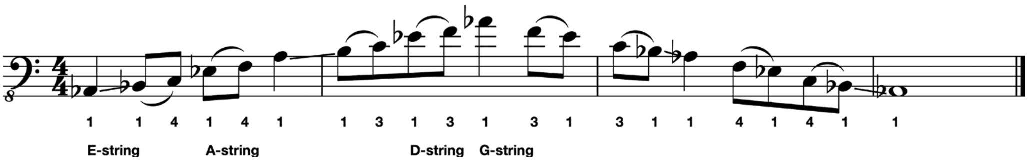
EXAMPLE 1



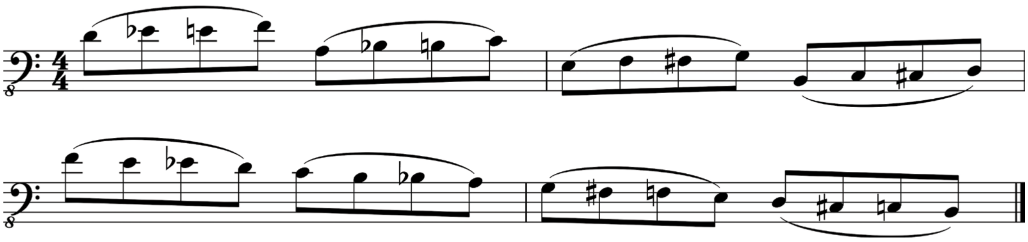
EXAMPLE 2



EXAMPLE 3



EXAMPLE 4



Music To Your Ears

Elixir® Bass Strings - inspired by Bass Players Worldwide

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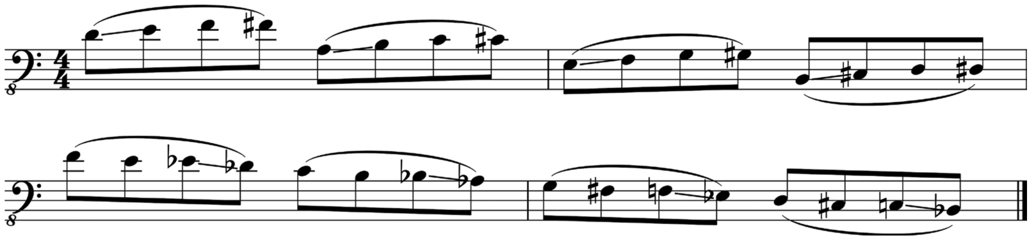
Note that you can start each phrase on the E string, rather than switching over to the A string for the last three phrases. The point is that the intervals remain the same regardless of key. In fact, I've found that when playing in keys with lots of sharps or flats, the easiest way around this is just to think of the intervals between notes, rather than worrying about accidentals. This can take you away from the safety blanket of open strings, but that can be a good thing in tuning your ears to play accurately.

Let's take this further with a two octave phrase. **Example 2** also shows the phrase in Ab, but we've added a full two octaves, both up and down again. Notice that we're sliding between the Ab and Bb going both up and down, but at the top we're sliding on the third finger from F to high Ab. Of course, you could slide on a first finger from the high Eb to F, and hammer on the top Ab using extended fingering, if you wanted to.

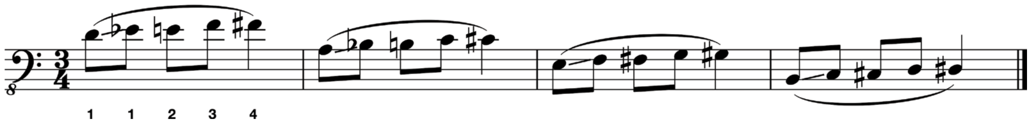
Example 3 shows the same phrase, but with a radically different approach. Here we're moving up the A string through the positions right up to high Bb and C on the A. From there the Eb, F and top Ab are all in the same position. You could try a similar approach on the D string where you move up on the middle Ab all the way up to the high F, and just on the D string. Come to that, you could try moving up the E string to the first F or even middle Ab before crossing over. This kind of approach was developed by François Rabbath, and while it may seem a bit ambitious at first, really gets your confidence up regarding playing any phrase on any string in just about any position.

If we now add extended fingering to pull-offs and hammer-ons, things get a lot more flexible, as **example 4** shows. By using one finger per semitone, you can expand the available notes under the hand. Of course this will only work from about the fourth position and upwards unless you have larger hands: mine are quite large and I can get extended fingering right down to second position at a stretch. I've only given the notes in fourth position extended up here. Try investigating forwards and backwards in different positions and see what notes are available to you.

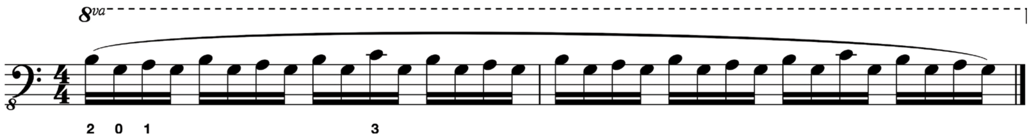
EXAMPLE 5



EXAMPLE 6



EXAMPLE 7



> **"YOU CAN USE A VARIETY OF SLIDING AND HAMMER TECHNIQUES IN JUST ABOUT ANY KEY YOU LIKE"**

We can extend this process even further by adding slides to the hammer-ons in extended fingering. **Example 5** shows sliding up a semitone between first and second fingers and down again, and thereby creating a whole tone each time. Notice that here you slide up a semitone with the first finger and then hammer on with the second for the whole tone distance. So you would play in the first half of bar 1: D, with a slide to Eb, then hammer on the E and then play the F natural and F#. On the way down the reverse is the case: slide down with the second finger and pull off for the first finger's pitch. **Example 6** shows how you can add an extra note with a combination of a slide and hammer-ons. In all cases, the fingerings are the same.

With these principles, this is just the beginning. You can investigate slides on any finger as you hammer on or pull off, and any slide could be a semitone, tone, minor or even major 3rd in pitch. There's a lot of scope for building your playing and technical vocabulary out of all recognition here.

Once you get up into thumb position, the possibilities for hammer-ons and pull-offs still offer lots of scope. Look at **example 7**: here it's written an octave lower than you play, to save ledger lines. Notice that the 0 marking will be where you place your thumb, and you're hammering on and off the notes with each finger.Search YouTube for Lee Ritenour playing 'Uptown' with the legendary Brian Bromberg on double bass. The bass solo starts at 3.27 with this very techniques I've depicted in **example 7**, but as you will see, Brian is including double-handed tapping as well. Note the low action on his bass that makes techniques like these achievable. That, and decent amplification will make all these techniques straightforward and you won't have to play so hard. In fact you'll find yourself being much more relaxed when playing, which helps both strength and endurance.

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STEVE LAWSON

Effects guru Lawson prepares us for disaster...

Some things in life hold true no matter what. They're not 'will they happen?' events, rather they're a matter of 'when'. One of those is your gear breaking down. Quite often on massive rock tours, the artists will have a back-up rig. Redundancy, it's often called – you have a spare set of everything, ready to be swapped over, ready for that one gig in a thousand where something goes wrong.

Whether your setup is bass into amp via a single jack lead, or you run through a rack that makes Robert Fripp look frugal in his effect choices, there are multiple points of possible failure in all of our music lives. Some are insurmountable – if the power in the building fails, you're stuffed unless you also play a loud acoustic instrument (yay! drum circle!). Others are mostly preventable: changing your (hopefully rechargeable) batteries at regular intervals rather than waiting for them to fail is wise. Making sure that all the ends of your instrument and patch cables are screwed in tight is a job that takes maybe 10 minutes a month, but can save you all manner of teeth-clenching and troubleshooting in a soundcheck. And one of the most simple solutions: get things fixed the moment they start to fail. Don't leave that wobbly, crackly socket on your distortion pedal to completely fail before you fix it. Don't just shrug when your chorus pedal intermittently cuts out because the power socket is 'a bit off'. Fix it. Now. Stop reading, come back later, and go fix it. Find someone who can do it. It'll save you time and a lot of money over the years, and may even stop you from getting fired for being the Bassist Whose Gear Never Works.

I'm speaking, of course, from years of experience of forgetting things, and trying to fix them on the gig. At a recent show opening for Divinity Roxx at the Jazz Cafe in London, my entire soundcheck was taken up discovering that the USB cable that runs from my soundcard to my laptop was knackered. Thankfully, a friend who worked in tech support for Focusrite was there to save the day, but I got no soundcheck and then encountered crisis number two: for the second time in my career, one side of the stereo channel I was going into on the desk was out of phase. But we didn't find out something was wrong until I started playing. So I didn't know that it was just the monitor where the signal was summed to mono that was broken and I didn't know it sounded fine out front...

Part of my problem troubleshooting it was that, using the new processor I wrote about last month, I wasn't as familiar with my current set-up and sound as I had been for the previous year. Doubts kicked in, I thought I was causing it not the PA, and I didn't want to blame the soundman in front of the audience (always a bad move). So I played on, did OK, and everyone had a fine time. But I now have 'check the phase' in my list of possible troubleshooting solutions. It had happened once before years ago, but had dropped off my radar. Time to refresh my checklist... Are the USB cables OK? Check. Is the desk out of phase? Check. Are my patch cables working? Check. Is anything buzzing? Check. Are my batteries fresh? Check. So, go check all your gear: every screw, nut, battery, cable, pedal, plug-in, stand, cabinet... all of it. And be back here next month, ready to make some noise!

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BAXTER ON BASS

Bass dealer extraordinaire Andy Baxter presents a pair of luscious Harmony H22 basses

Vintage Harmony basses are highly sought-after, in particular the Harmony H22. Described in Harmony's 1966 catalogue as having a "comfortable auditorium size ultra-thin hollow tone chamber body", the H22 feels delightful to play and sounds great, taking you back to the sound of the 60s, with a little help from a good set of flatwound strings, factory-fitted as standard. The Gold Tone pickup was especially designed in co-operation with DeArmond for dual tone and fine response.

Ronnie Lane regularly used the Harmony H22 early on in his musical career with the Small Faces. According to our sources, Ronnie used this model to record 'Itchycoo Park' as well as on live performances. The H22 can also be seen in the performances of 'Gimme Some Lovin'' and 'Keep On Running' by the Spencer Davis Group.

The Harmony H22/1 was Harmony's double cutaway version of the H22, and that model is now extremely rare. Pictured is an 'all too beautiful' pairing of a 1965 Harmony H22 and a 1969 Harmony H22/1 double cutaway model, now available for viewing by appointment at Andy Baxter's showroom in London.

www.andybaxterbass.com

Why Choose a Stonefield® Electric Bass?

In the past few months I've been talking to you in our adverts about the overall set of features and the benefits to you when you choose to purchase a Stonefield® electric bass. For the next several months I'm going to focus on the individual features that separate a Stonefield® from the rest of the pack.

There are a lot of different bass designs out there in the market, but the first thing that really stands out on the Stonefield® bass is our use of the patented Tomm Stanley™ Tuning System tailpiece. Firstly, I'm proud of this system; so proud of it that I gave it my name. After several years of testing, tuning and refining the system I can confidently say that it provides better instrument handling than you can get with any traditional tuning machine. We may not be the first to fit a tailpiece tuner on a bass, however the Tomm Stanley™ Tuning System provides a number of advantages when compared to other methods of tuning:

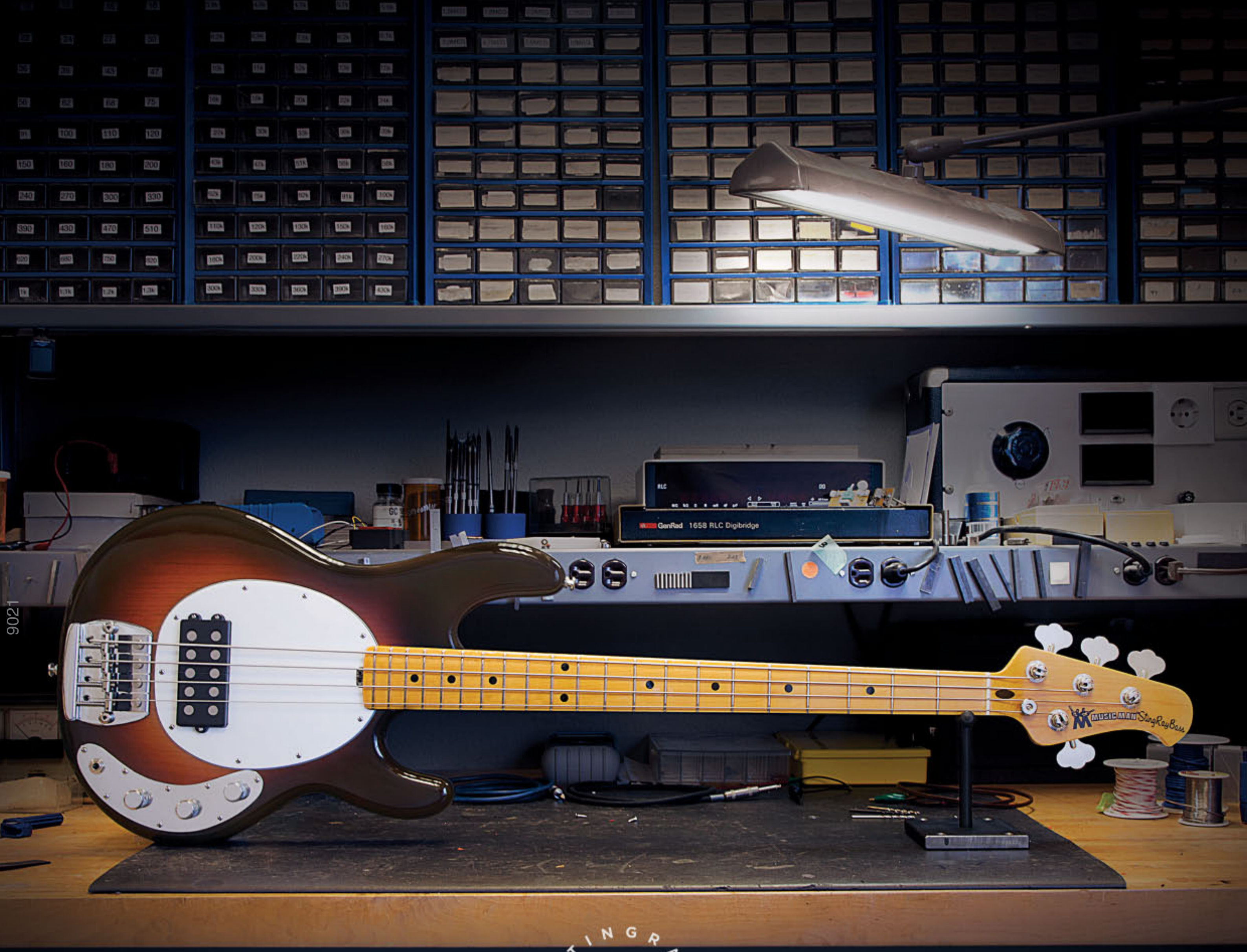
- The instrument has a neutral balance, so you'll have greater freedom for your fretting hand
- It's easier to string and accurately tune the instrument than any other tailpiece system
- Mid-song tuning adjustments are more convenient when your fretting hand remains free
- You can use any brand of strings that you want
- Made of anodised aluminium, brass and stainless steel (with a titanium option) you will never have issues with rusting metal components
- It looks seriously cool

A hand crafted bass from Stonefield® really is like no other bass and this is just one of the many features we incorporate to bring you the best instrument available to express your musical voice. As our company slogan proclaims, I think it is the bass that players like you and me have always wanted.

Tomm Stanley
Founder
Stonefield Musical Instrument Company

Stonefield®
The Bass You've Always Wanted

Stonefield® basses are only available direct from our online store at www.stonefieldmusic.com



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Named for its smooth even tone that is reminiscent of the highly sought after vintage Music Man StingRay sound, "Old Smoothie" has been precisely reproduced including the one-of-a-kind custom made 10 pole piece pickup design, body headstock and pickguard shape, 34-inch scale maple neck and fingerboard, high profile narrow frets, active electronics, hardware and exclusive chocolate-burst finish.

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